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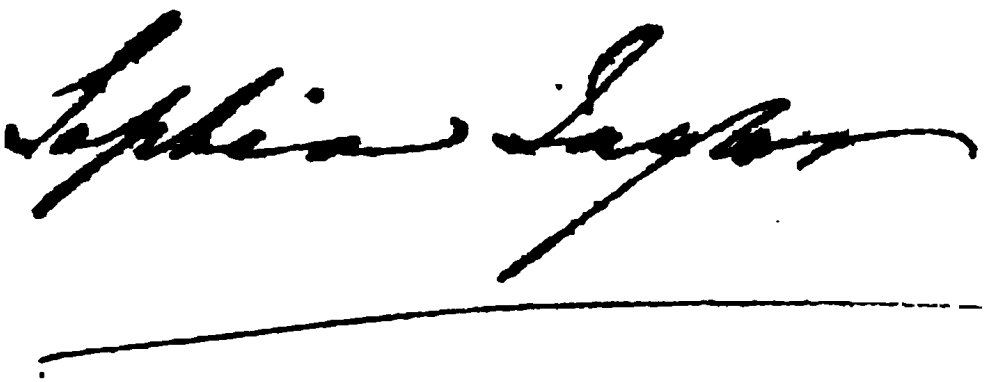

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THE MESSIAH,

A SACRED POEM

from

The German

of

KLOPSTOCK.

Vol — 2

Abaddon conducting the Soul of Phile to the Infernal Gulph. Book XIII.

London

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THE

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AND THE

THREE LAST BY MRS. MEEKE.

To which is prefixed,

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THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK X.

The Argument.

God looks down from his throne, while the Messiah casts his eyes on his sepulchre, and prays; then with a look fills Satan and Adramelech with terror. Many elevated souls are now given to the earth, one of whom delivers his thoughts of the dying Redeemer. A character of these souls. A conversation between Simeon and John the Baptist. Miriam and Deborah lament the dying Saviour in a hymn. Lazarus comforts Lebbeus. Uriel gives notice that the first of the angels of death is descending to the earth. The impression this makes on Enoch, Abel, Seth, David, Job, and more particularly on our first parents, who descend to the sepulchre of Jesus, and pray. The angel of death descends, addresses the Messiah, and makes known the divine command. The Messiah dies.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK X.

STILL farther do I travel in my tremendous path, still nearer draw to the Saviour's death—to his death who breath'd nought but love divine, and whose love supports my fainting powers. O let me not, presumptuous, too boldly sing the great Redeemer! nor without solemn dignity attune my song! Look down, propitious, on me, who am but dust, O thou, by whose omnipotence I am environ'd! Thou seest all the conceptions of my mind, ere into thought they rise, nor is there a word that trembles on my tongue to thee unknown. O my Redeemer! enlighten me, and when I stumble, forgive! A ray of thy light, a drop of thy grace, is to the famish'd soul fulness, and to its thirst, the refreshing stream. The throne, which was wont to shine serene in visible beauty, now stood involv'd in the thickest gloom of night: solitary it stood, around it no immortal ador'd, save an angel of death, who prostrate beneath the lowest step, with rais'd hands and suppliant eyes, look'd up with fix'd attention. Meanwhile Jehovah, from his throne, beheld with steady countenance the divine Redeemer from sin. He through the bright dust of scatter'd suns, and worlds obscure, through silent nature look'd with awful view, which none understood or felt, but he on whom the eternal eye was fix'd. Death, now so near, the Saviour's whole frame pervades. The worlds tremble through all their secret powers. Troubled, enraptur'd, silent, stand all the immortals, contemplating the Son of God, on

whose divine face a more deadly paleness sits. His weary, languid eyes are faintly cast on his near sepulchre, hewn out of a lonely rock among trees of ancient growth, and with a mind still fill'd with benignity and soft compassion, which no pain could expel from thence, he thus pour'd forth in secret sighs, the yet warm thoughts of his expiring soul.

There in the sleep of death soon wilt thou, my body, lie. For this did I assume thee, O thou tabernacle of clay! Yet, though thou shalt lie down in death, thou shalt not see corruption. O my gracious Father! "wipe every tear from every eye" that shall then surround me weeping!—Have pity on them, when thou shalt bring them to their latest hour! O holy Father! have mercy on all who believe in thy beloved Son, who now dies for the sins of the world. Some shall gently fall asleep; some shall expire in torment. O Father! have compassion on all who, in their struggles with death, shall thirst after help, and fly to thee for grace and consolation. Have compassion on those who, weary of life, shall be brought by many tribulations to the grave: who in poverty shall live, and yet shall not deny thee: who, while they keep a conscience void of offence both towards thee and towards man, shall become the scorn and mockery of sinners: who, true to their friends, bless even their enemies: who, by their actions, shew their love to their brethren, their love to mankind. Have compassion for those who, undazzled by the honours, the wealth, the dignities of life, shall use them for the good of others; themselves regardless of the glittering toys, and all the distinctions of vanity. Oh be merciful to all who, according to the variety of the gifts and abilities they have receiv'd from thee, shall obey thee in truth and purity of heart: in their last hour shew them the light of thy countenance: when their eyes sink in death; when corruption waits for their mortal frame, and their aspiring souls are ready to take their flight to their Creator, then visit them with thy consolations, and receive them to the world of rest, and peace, and joy eternal. O holy

Father, God of Love! by these gaping wounds, on which my body is now suspended: by this bloody wreath of piercing thorns: by what I now suffer, and shall farther suffer: by that love through which I humbled myself to the death—this death of the cross, to accomplish the salvation of mankind, hear me, and grant that they whom I love may be faithful to the end—may die in comfort, and rising to eternal life, receive the bright crown of unfading glory and immortality.

Thus silent pray'd the great, the dying Messiah. Then, turning his benevolent eyes from the sepulchre, he look'd with stern brow on the Dead Sea, where lay Satan and Adramelech. His eyes now darted convulsive terrors and deep dismay into the depths of that tempestuous lake, and both the apostate spirits sunk into the lowest misery. Then was fulfill'd the sentence of the Eternal, that the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's head. Satan, in the midst of his anguish, stamp'd into atoms one of the subterraneous rocks, and intermingling his faltering accents with languid howlings, thus began:

Feel'st thou, like me, the inflam'd, unquenchable tortures, which death, eternal death, pours into the deepest recesses of this immortal substance? Behold, to thee, thou lost, condemn'd, eternal sinner! I, a lost, condemn'd, eternal sinner, will, if possible, describe their dread appearance. 'Tis true, the lowest Hell affords not images sufficient to enable me to shew thee all my torments. Yet hear me, thou accurs'd! If thou feelest not all that I feel, what shall I tell thee will render thee sufficiently miserable. With me shalt thou feel them, or, stiffen'd with horror, shall dread their approach. So low am I abas'd by my misery, that I no longer rejoice at thy torment. So deep is my abasement, that with furious indignation I dare to confess it.—Yes, he is omnipotent!—But what—what am I?—The blackest monster of the abyss!—The lowest—the lowest I lie, and all Hell is upon me! With all its torments am I oppress'd!—To all the terrors of the fiery gulph, my boasted empire, am I abandon'd!—Has he held those, whom he has doom'd

to eternal horror, worthy of being cast down by his thunder? No, an angel bid us fly—our boasted courage sunk, and we like cowards fled!—But in whose name did his messenger utter that command?—Oh, what do I feel! With what new judgment am I threaten'd! The great name I dare not utter! He in whose name we fled —he whom we persecuted, now perhaps dies! A new, a more fiery dart of destruction flies with this thought through all my mortal powers. Darkness on darkness surrounds me. The obscure mystery affords not the least glimmering ray—Ah! this is misery—all, all around me is misery!—I, his eternal sacrifice! Even the hope, the wretched, the agonizing hope of annihilation vanishes. Ye worlds, and thou Heaven, turn ye to chaos—to night —to Hell!—Fall ye upon me, and hide me from the wrath of the Omnipotent.

Adramelech, whose pride was humbled low, could scarce, with sobbing anguish and despairing look, reply. Help me, I implore thee, help me, cry'd he, bellowing loud, while on Satan he laid his iron hands. Help me —thou monster, thou accurs'd, thou odious rebel, help me. I suffer the pangs of ever-dying death. Once I could hate thee with furious hatred, but now I can no more!—This too is pointed misery! Oh, how am I tortur'd! I would curse thee, but I cannot. I would curse myself for imploring help of thee. Could I, with flaming rage, vent my curses on thee, it would perhaps afford me a drop of comfort.—I will—I will. Here, fainting with the effort, he backward fell.

Thus both experienc'd the vengeance sent forth from the mighty Victor. So far Terror stretch'd her crushing arm, that other infernal rebels felt her power, and the lowest Hell resounded with the howlings of despair.

But O muse of Sion! no farther unveil the depths of Hell, the dreary abodes of pain and horror. Another and a nobler scene opens before thee; a scene of sacred melancholy, of holy adoration, and of grace divine.

Jesus now turning his eyes from the Dead Sea, view'd the celestial bands that, dissolv'd in pious grief, and rapt

in sacred wonder, surrounded the cross. The soft sensations of eternal love appear'd in the looks of the divine Saviour; and long did they dwell on those souls who never yet enter'd a mortal frame, or sanctify'd the dust. Now approach'd one of those happy periods in which the earth has been bless'd with many noble minds, endu'd with such lasting power, as to spread their influence through future ages. 'Tis true, the fame of virtuous deeds doth not always float along the stream of time: yet the great effects of fair examples are seen in those of docile mind, conquering disgust and error; and, with a progress secret, but sure, are found to flow into the deeds of posterity. Thus, though the stone thrown into the water sinks, on the surface wider and still wider circles, quivering spread around. Now one of the most exalted of those unembody'd spirits perceiving a glimpse of the light, which, during her stay on earth, was to beam pure sanctification and radiant truth, thus indulg'd her thoughts:

Still more and more do I feel that he is the great Messiah. Innumerable and powerful as the suns that gild the starry fields of light whence we came, but with influence much more benign, are the thoughts I read in his countenance.—But how different is his appearance from that of our friends the angels!—Ah, he resembles the men by whom he is surrounded! but in his form alone he resembles them. In their faces is something gloomy, and averse to their Creator. Ah! what is man? We must also be of their number; like them we must be cloth'd in mortal bodies; like them shall live awhile, and then return to the Eternal. Will the Creator send us to another race of human beings? or, are these the children of Adam? If they are, then are they our future brethren. Yet this does not seem to be the earth which I, at Adam's creation, saw; for that excell'd in beauty. —O thou Father of angels and of men, be thy decrees accomplish'd! Thy divine will be done! and thine, O thou Messiah! Of all that is difficult to conceive, this is most inconceivable, that thou, once array'd in thy Father's glory, sufferest—There thou, rais'd above the hill,

art suspended; there thy passing life seems to flow away; and ye angels, who once resolv'd my questions, are now silent. Yet within myself I feel that this departing life, to which, O thou divine! hast condescended to submit, is of importance to me—to me, perhaps, of more importance than to the flaming seraph.—I love the suffering Messiah more than I can tell. O my God, accomplish what thou hast begun in thy creature: complete my inflam'd, my continual, my devout breathings after felicity! Thou alone, O thou Infinite Source of perfection, art my felicity! In thy presence is eternal joy!

Thus meditated the transported spirit, and not fruitless were its meditations. God, who oft in distant periods prepares what he is determin'd to accomplish, thus forms the soul for a life of probation, and for the succeeding joys of eternal, ineffable felicity.

Let time now fly with joyful wings. Around the cross stood waiting, with devout fervor, the future guardians of the souls who drew near to a mortal life. Trembling with solicitous joy, the attendant angels stood, while from the Redeemer's eye issu'd the great command, Go and live; believe, and overcome. Their angels then smiling, receiv'd their charge, and led them forth.

Relate, O Sion's muse! their life. Relate their peculiar gifts, and graces, while dwelling in tabernacles of clay, they pass'd their mortal pilgrimage in sacred love and pious ardour, imitating the bright example of their Saviour. The effects of the new sensations they had experienc'd on beholding the dying Messiah, took root in all, and at length unfolding with their increasing perceptions, became mingled with the resplendent grace that flows from above.

One of the fairest of these souls was thine, O Timothy! With ardent and with humble zeal didst thou watch over the church committed to thy care. Undaunted didst thou venture to preach a dying, a risen Jesus. It was Paul, the chosen champion of the Mediator, against the mighty of the earth, who oppos'd the doctrine of Christ, the conqueror of death.——It was Paul who brought to

him the knowledge of the Lord, out of that awful, that dazzling light which beam'd conviction. The pure soul of Timothy learnt, with tremulous joy, the way to eternal felicity, and taught it to thousands. Thousands too were converted by his death; when having nobly finish'd his course, he fell by the executioner's sword. Like Paul and Cephas, he, as a bright and resplendent luminary, shone in the church.

Thou, Antipas, didst early receive the glorious rewards prepar'd for the faithful. Then the Judge of the earth, in his sentence on the church of Patmos, mention'd thine immortal name. With inflexible fidelity, with pure, with warm affection, thou didst love thy crucify'd Lord, love him till death.

Hermas, with tears of joy, sang the Mediator—Sang him who dy'd, who rose again, who ascended on high, and led captivity captive—Sang the Son of God, the Saviour of frail and mortal man—The Son of God, who shall raise the dead—shall judge the world. His hymns were sung by Christians retir'd to solitary caves, when Hermas receiving an intimation of the will of the Most High, left the choir of his rejoicing brethren, joyfully suffer'd death, and went to join the more exalted choir above.

Phebe, desirous of doing good, and winning souls, left the narrow limits that confine her sex, and generously devoted herself to the service of the church. She kindly strove to remove the distresses of the indigent; to help the sick; to comfort the dying. Heaven-born Charity, her dear companion, was always with her; but she fled from Applause, and was known only to the pious, and to the angels.

From every fluctuating doubt of false wisdom, Herodion at length was freed, and was convinc'd that he who was not more exalted by miracles than by truth, had made known the Eternal Father's will; dispers'd the shades of death, and mark'd the path that leads to Heaven. Through what intricate mazes of thorny speculation did he wander, before he reach'd the light which

God, at length, pour'd around him! In what painful, what fruitless researches did he engage, before he found the lightness of the scale of human knowledge, and the preponderating weight of that of heavenly wisdom!

Epaphras was powerful in prayer. Like Paul, he was esteem'd worthy to suffer for the sake of the crucify'd Jesus, and was thrown into the prison of a tyrant. The prison heard his prayers for the churches, and the blessings deriv'd from his supplications chiefly stream'd down on his belov'd Colossians. With them he watch'd and strove with unwearied diligence. His zeal and fervor were bless'd with success. They flourish'd and spread their branches, they blossom'd and brought forth the fruits of sanctification, righteousness and peace. Laodicea too, partook of the benefits of his instructions, and by his exhortations and prayers, many souls were inflam'd with love to the crucify'd Saviour. But at last Laodicea sunk into a cool indifference. The belov'd disciple of Jesus then sent from Patmos the sentence of the Judge, which was mingled with mercy and with grace. On her repentance, he promis'd that she should still be cloth'd in white garments, and still receive the victor's crown.

Persis was one of those favourites of Heaven, whom God, through tribulation, leads to eternal rest. Resign'd amidst her sufferings, she mingled her tears of affliction with those of gratitude and joy, when in silent prayer she pour'd out her soul to her Maker and Friend.

Not from a love of fame, the partial, the lukewarm rewarder of Virtue, often her cruel persecutor, and malevolent slanderer, was Apelles actuated; nor from a fondness for the esteem of the wise, who, however sagacious, know not the secret springs of action; for the act alone is visible to the bodily eye, the intention only to the mind of the agent. Thus within himself he often thought, while his love of the Omniscient, whose piercing view penetrates the secret purposes of the soul, with the exalted rewards promis'd to the pure in heart, were the animating motives that excited him to practise the most exalted virtues.

The merit of Flavius Clemens arose not from his divesting himself of the lustre deriv'd from his affinity to Cæsar. It was easy to despise the tyrant: but the courtiers accus'd him of being immers'd in indolence, unbecoming a Roman; of being dead to business, honour, and his country. His noble soul, though far from being insensible to the sting of these reproaches, still persever'd in a steady adherence to the duties of christianity, duties which he esteem'd the most exalted and sublime. Thus he became worthy of the martyr's crown. Fain would he have perform'd nearer the throne, those actions which instructed and animated the saints; but knowing that his generous labours for the good of mankind would there be lost on servile flatterers, and their luxurious lord, he confin'd himself within a more contracted sphere, and enjoy'd the opportunity of doing good, of meditating on his death, and improving his immortal soul.

Lucius, though wrapp'd in the entangled net of business, with a mind free and undisturb'd, discharg'd his duty with unwearyd zeal; neither proud of his merit, nor discourag'd when the seed he sow'd seem'd not to shoot. Sedulous in redeeming time, he knew how to banish the world; to spare some sacred hours for prayer and meditation; some happy hours for the gentle offices of meek-ey'd Mercy and of smiling Charity; and through this pleasing course he enter'd into life eternal.

Ye females, emulate the virtues of Tryphena. Ye also live among unbelievers. With the purest, the noblest, the most virtuous passion, the tender Tryphena lov'd. The youth was beautiful, and adorn'd with every amiable quality; but he was an heathen, and resolv'd to remain so. Tryphena apprehended danger from his easy flowing eloquence, and still more from the soft passion that swell'd her heart. She therefore struggled and triumph'd over it. Serenity and joy were then the rewards of her pious resolution, not to hazard a soul destin'd for immortality.

Linus, who before his martyrdom, bravely disdain'd to accept of proffer'd life, purchas'd by apostacy, was

superior to the mean enjoyments which ensnare even the good, and which with pain they strive to shun. He, retiring alone with the Searcher of hearts, or joining in company with friends of pure and noble sentiments, lov'd to compare men and their actions with the examples and precepts of the word of God, the source of sublime thoughts and heavenly sentiments. He lov'd to disperse the gloom that hovers o'er the grave, and to lose himself in the bright ecstatic prospect of a resurrection to eternal glory.

From Trajan, who here stain'd his noble mind, was led Ignatius, sentenc'd to be dragg'd to a cruel death. He triumph'd in bearing ignominy for his beloved Lord. No meaner reproach could be brought against this great, this exalted saint, than his too earnestly striving for the honours which encircle the martyr's brow. The eagerness of the sons of Vice and Folly in pursuit of pleasure, could only exceed the excessive ardour with which he long'd to obtain the radiant crown; if there can be excess in aspiring after such a prize. His setting glories shone with the same mild influence, as that with which they rose. How valuable is the conclusion of the life of a Christian! How beautiful to his companions in the victory, appears the sweat of the conqueror, when he has obtain'd his prize, and the great reward is ready! He strengthen'd, he animated with the prospect of eternal felicity, the brethren who flock'd once more to see him, and to receive his last blessing. Those whom his eyes, swimming in the kindly drops of joy, could not behold, by his letters he exhorted, comforted, and inflam'd with love to the divine Redeemer, till being cruelly dragg'd to the amphitheatre, he was there, by wild beasts, torn in pieces.

The parents of the young and amiable Claudia were heathens; heathens were her brothers and sisters. Her father was a man of honour; affectionate was her mother; her brothers and sisters were worthy of esteem. Claudia lov'd them, and shar'd their love. Yet she alone became a Christian. She then lamented their error, and

boldly persevering, in spite of opposition, dy'd in the faith of her Lord.

He who flies from society, is not always an enemy to mankind. Far from the busy world liv'd Amplias, who, to a deep knowledge of human frailty, united an ardent and steady desire to fulfil the great, the astonishing command, Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect. From the radiant seats of Heaven stream'd this injunction, like a divine light, on the inhabitants of the dust. He look'd, he never turn'd from the narrow gate through which it beam'd; but with vigorous perseverance, falling and rising, climb'd the rugged steep.

Phlegon had travell'd over the bright circle of Grecian literature, and great were his earthly possessions; yet that did not inflate him with vanity, nor these sink him into voluptuousness. Wherever he went, silent flow'd the balm of humanity; the sick receiv'd comfort; the naked were cloth'd. Gifts more essential he also bestow'd: these were salutary counsels to the diseases of the mind, diseases worse than those of the body. He dispens'd healing comfort to the soul entangled in the web of doubts, and many wavering Christians, who were ready to forsake the bleeding Friend of the human race, he brought back into the path of Heaven. Less from prudence than from real humility, he seem'd a stranger to worldly wisdom, and to know nothing but Jesus—Jesus the Redeemer from sin, the surest support in life and in death! but to his brethren, perplex'd with doubts and scruples, his profound knowledge flow'd like an inexhaustible spring, and the thirsty traveller was refresh'd with copious draughts.

Tryphosa, kind by nature, and still more kind from duty, was the best of mothers. Her numerous offspring she carefully instructed in the knowledge of Christ. Inexhaustible, and unweary'd in the arts of wisdom, she finish'd the work she was appointed to perform; and was an ornament to the church: yet her many good actions were conceal'd. But scarce had she brought forth her last son, when she expir'd weeping. She bewail'd

him, and dy'd. Then the blessing of the Eternal descended on her family. Her elder sons educated the infant; who at length dy'd a martyr. The seraphs receiv'd, from the arms of death, the happy spirit. They ascended in triumph; and, with ecstatic joy, she welcom'd her son on his arrival at the regions of unutterable felicity.

To forbear revenge, when revenge is justice, is great: to love the offender, is noble: to alleviate his distresses by private offices of kindness, is divine. Thus didst thou —with reverence I write thy name—thus didst thou, Erastus! When thine exalted soul enter'd the celestial abodes, angels, rising from their golden seats, congratulated thee, and hail'd thine arrival with songs of triumph.

These were the souls which their guardian angels led from the cross of the dying Jesus, into a life of probation. With expanded wings they descended from mount Olivet, and came to Gethsemane. At the garden where the Son of the Eternal suffer'd his agony, they were seiz'd with awe. Those who stood under the palms saluted them with cordial love: These were Simeon, and the great prophet, who had the honour to baptize the divine Jesus, and to see the Holy Spirit hovering over him like a dove, while the voice of the Most High, descending from Heaven, pronounc'd, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleas'd. Here were also Esaiah, the great prophet of the crucify'd Jesus, and Ezekiel, who beheld a type of the resurrection; when crying, Hear, ye dry bones; the bones shook, and the dead awoke. Here too were Noah, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord; righteous Lot; Melchisedek, a prophet, priest and king; Joseph, and Benjamin his brother; David and Jonathan; fair Miriam, the sister of Moses, and thou, Deborah, who sang the mercies of God, the saviour of thee, and of the host of Israel.

Simeon now cry'd, Blessed souls! go and enter your frail habitations of clay, the Lord be with you. May ye bring many to salvation! May ye diffuse benevolence and love through all the descendants of Adam; benevo-

lence purer, and more sublime than the philosophers ever taught! Ah, John, how happy is their fate! How exalted will be their reward! Does not this sight brighten the gloomy ideas that stream from the hill of Golgotha?

The harbinger of the Lord return'd—Had I words to express my thoughts, could floods of mournful or joyous tears reveal what I feel, then, O Simeon, would I tell what I have felt, since the gracious Messiah has been dying on the cross. But silence best becomes me.

Thy words, return'd Simeon, pierce through my soul. I was exulting in the end of his sufferings, and the glories that await him on the right hand of the Majesty on High. But how hast thou brought me back! Ah! he whom, weeping, I embrac'd—he whom, speechless, I held in my arms, till God restoring my voice, I burst into prayers and thanksgivings—he—he bleeds—he bleeds on the cross—with malefactors bleeds!—While his heart still glows with love to man—with love to his murderers—he bleeds—he dies!—But I will hold my peace till all be accomplish'd.

Then Deborah and Miriam, after a long and mournful silence, burst into lugubrious lays, flowing with melting softness. For the voices of the immortals rise in spontaneous harmony to express sensations like those of Deborah and Miriam. Hence she who, on Ephraim's mount, gave her name to the spreading palm, and Amram's daughter, thus in alternate verses sang.

O thou, once the most beautiful among men, thou, who was the fairest of the sons of women, how does Death, with bloody hand, deform thy face!

My heart is plung'd in softest sorrow, and clouds of grief surround me; yet still to me he appears the most beautiful of men: of all the creation the most lovely: fairer than the sons of light, when, in lucid splendor, they bow before the Eternal.

Mourn, ye cedars of Lebanon, which, to the weary, afford a refreshing shade: the sighing Cedar is cut down: of the cedar is form'd his cross.

Mourn, ye flowers of the vale, which grow on the

banks of the silver stream; ye must not encircle the Saviour's head: it is already crown'd with piercing thorns.

Unweary'd he lift up his hands to his Father in behalf of sinners. His feet, unweary'd, visited the dwellings of affliction. Now are they pierc'd. His hands and feet are pierc'd with cruel wounds.

His divine brow, on this mount, he bow'd to the dust: from it ran, mingled, blood and sweat. Alas! how is it now wounded by cruel thorns!—by his bloody crown!

The soul of his mother is wounded as with a sword. Ah, thou Son most gracious and divine! have compassion on thy mother, and comfort her, lest, at the foot of thy cross, she die!

Ah, were I his mother, and already in the life of bliss, a sword would still pierce through my soul!

O Miriam! his compassion-beaming eyes are almost extinguish'd, and hard he draws his breath, which still breathes nought but love. Soon will those looks no longer be directed towards the Heavens.

O Deborah! a mortal paleness sits on his fallen cheeks, wet with the trickling drops of love. Soon will his divine head sink, on that cross, to rise no more.

Thou, who shinest above, O celestial Jerusalem! burst into tears of joy. Soon will the hour of affliction be past.

Thou, who sinnest below, O terrestrial Jerusalem! burst into tears of grief; for soon, at thy barbarous hands, will the Sovereign Judge require his blood.

The stars in their courses stand still, and all the Creation is struck dumb, at the sufferings of her Creator!—At the sufferings of Jesus! the everlasting High Priest! the Redeemer! the Prince of Peace!

The earth also stands still, and from you who dwell on its surface, the sun has withdrawn his light. For this is Jesus! the everlasting High Priest, the Redeemer, the Prince of Peace.

Thus responsive sang Deborah and Miriam. The blessed Saviour now visibly approaching the moment of death, most of the faithful withdrew, unable to bear the

awful sight. With fix'd eye and unsteady step, Lebbeus retir'd, follow'd at a distance by Lazarus, who was involv'd in more compos'd distress. Lebbeus entering a ruinous sepulchre near the foot of the mount of Olives, and leaning on a piece of the fallen rock, sunk down upon his knees, and rested his head on the craggy stone. When Lazarus stopping at the entrance, with gentle voice, that would attract the ear of languishing sorrow, and make her stoop to listen, thus spake:

Sink not, my friend, beneath thy grief. Lift up thy face from the damp, the silent tomb, and let me see thee look at me. Ah, dost thou no longer know the voice of him whom thou hast always lov'd?—of him who has return'd thy love?—I am Lazarus, whose death cost thee so many tears, whom Jesus restor'd to life. Oh with what a transport of joy, that seem'd too big for utterance, didst thou then, with faltering voice, thank our divine Master! Before we return'd him our grateful thanks, this body lay in the grave, and corruption began to seize upon it. Of this we have oft discours'd. Thou wast carry'd away by the opinion of the other disciples, who thought that his kingdom was to be on earth ere it began in Heaven; yet never couldst thou solve the doubts that kept me from labouring to find some earthly meaning in the sublime discourses of our Lord. Shake off then, O my friend! this depressing grief. Open to me thine afflicted heart. Thou shalt lament him—thou shalt lament the divine Saviour, who lingering in acutest pain, has, during successive hours, been dying on the cross. Yet sink not under thy grief. He can, if he pleases, descend from the fatal tree. But though he die, he will never see corruption. Can he who was before Abraham, who descended from Heaven, to raise mankind to the mansions of bliss—can he be subject to corruption?

Lebbeus still lean'd on the rock, yet turning his face towards Lazarus, with fix'd eyes look'd up to his friend, who running to him, embrac'd him, brought him out of the sepulchre, and seizing his hand, cry'd, Raise thine eyes, O Lebbeus, and behold. I perceive the presence

of God in this scene of gloomy horror. A day like this was surely never seen. With what solemnity is it distinguish'd by the Almighty! How has he cloth'd the heavens and earth with his terrors! May not God, by the death of the Holy One of Israel, be accomplishing those things we did not understand? Since the divine Saviour has been bleeding, I have felt—(how shall I express my thoughts in just and worthy terms?)—I have felt sensations soothing and peaceful, that have soften'd my affliction. Every thing around me appears sacred. Wherever I turn, I find the traces of the Eternal, the marks of his omnipresence. This sacred tranquillity is fill'd with divine sensations. Since the gracious Sufferer has been bleeding on the cross, I have heard a soft breezy fluttering, as if bands of the immortals were hovering near me. The same I heard when my soul had quitted its frail habitation. Celestial beings also frequently glance before my eyes with rapid flight. This, my dear friend, diffuses through my soul a divine calm, the peace of God, and dawning felicity.

Here Lazarus paus'd, when Lebbeus, fixing his looks upon him, suddenly call'd out, Thou art struck with amazement!—Ah, who is it? On whom dost thou gaze with such joyful transport?

Lazarus, on recovering his speech, answer'd, Just now a celestial spirit shot over me.—Never before have I had such a view of the glory of an immortal!—of the bliss of the other world! He has perhaps brought from Heaven some divine message: for his flight was swift as the quickest thought. Having thus with faltering rapture spoke, he embrac'd Lebbeus, and then added; He will not—No, he at whose birth the host of Heaven rejoic'd, will not see corruption!

Lazarus beheld the splendor of Uriel. The immortal had flown from the sun, and with face glowing from his inconceivable speed, went up to the progenitors of the human race, and said, I must—I must inform you of what I have seen. The chief angel of death descends from Heaven, with course direct towards the earth,

Sometimes he stops, as if to breathe; but the whole creation being at rest, no revolving star raises a refreshing gale. Shall I describe his awful form, his habiliments of terror? The flames of the Lord blaze before him; the flutter of his wings has the sound of the roaring storm, and ethereal silence flies at his approach. Was his flaming sword to touch a world, the enkindled dust would instantly be dispers'd through the immensity of space. Dreadful is his look—more dreadful than when on the guilty earth he pour'd the overwhelming deluge, and as the minister of the general destruction, empty'd the oceans of the celestial waters. Soon shall ye see him, and at the sight terror shall come upon you, as it did upon me. Deep inexpressible sorrow is impress'd on his awful countenance. Ah, he is sent to make known the death of the Mediator between God and man, and to denounce the judgments of the Almighty on yon guilty city! Uriel then trembling, turn'd aside, and mingled with the angels.

Amazement, mute and motionless, seiz'd the souls of the patriarchs, and this was follow'd by a dejection too deep for words to express. Struck with the thought that Christ, the Son of God, was in a few moments to expire, the souls for whom he was to die, tho' redeem'd from sin, seem'd to sink back into their former earthly life, and to feel sensations of guilt, which remembrance cloth'd in all its dread array.

Enoch lean'd with his left hand on a tomb, and rais'd his right towards Heaven. Though he had walk'd with God; though he had not fallen by the hand of Death, nor had ever moulder'd in the grave, yet in the eye of infinite Wisdom, and spotless Purity, he was not free from sin; but, by his faith and repentance, he pleas'd God, and was translated. Had the earth been dissolv'd, and the great lamp of heaven extinguish'd, still would he have remain'd undismay'd: but at the near approach of the Saviour's death, grief stream'd thro' his inmost powers; and the angels, the patriarchs, the unborn souls, and every mortal, vanish'd from his sight. Scarce could his eye discern the bloody cross.

Near him Abel lay on a rock in silent prostration. This son of Adam was adorn'd with the sweetest innocence that mortal knows, with fervent piety, and gentle love, yet dy'd by a murderous brother's hand. His eyes were now alternately lift up to Heaven, and cast on the cross, while he lamented that the Saviour of the world, the Son of Righteousness, should suffer a more cruel death than he.

Seth, the worthy brother of the first dead, and an early preacher of righteousness, had often, through the many centuries of his long life, meditated on the promis'd Seed, who should bruise the serpent's head; but had been able to form no idea of the dreadful sufferings of the mighty Victor. Now, with trembling heart, and stammering tongue, he cry'd, O thou Judge of all!—thou Judge of whatever was, and is, and is to come!—Then pausing, cast his looks to Heaven, to the cross, to the redeem'd, and to the sepulchres of the dead.

Long had darkness cover'd the eyes of David: Long had he trembled; yet, since the coming of Uriel, he ceas'd to tremble, and stood looking up to him, who drew near to the grave, absorb'd in that idea of the death of Jesus, which God had graciously impress'd on his soul. At length, recovering his speech, these broken sentences flow'd from his lips: O God! my Saviour's God! Why hast thou forsaken him? He pours forth his sighs before thee: but thou delayest to help him. The basest of sinners have laugh'd him to scorn—have derided his confidence in thee. He is pour'd out like water: his heart is melted within him: his tongue cleaveth to the roof of his mouth, and soon wilt thou, O Death! lay him in the dust. Wild beasts, and not men, encompass him. They stand and look upon him whom they have pierc'd—Ah, how have they pierc'd his hands and his feet! They have stretch'd him on the cross, and all his bones may be number'd! O God, most merciful and gracious, how unsearchable are all thy ways! Soon will he leave his mortal frame——soon will he ascend on high, triumph over the grave, and lead

Captivity captive. Then may his death be declar'd to the ends of the earth, that all the generations of men may bow before him!

Job, made perfect by sufferings, the trials of his faith and virtue, had been encompass'd by the terrors of the Omnipotent: but, unable longer to think of the crucify'd Saviour's death, he soar'd from the depths of affliction, crying, He will live!—he will live, and shall stand, at the latter day, upon the earth, the Conqueror of Death and of Hell. Then shall my eyes see him.—They shall see thee in thy glory, my Lord! my Redeemer! my Saviour.

Thus were the faithful affected by the expectation of the angel of Death. But the near approach of the awful moment, when the divine Messiah was to leave his earthly habitation, fill'd with still stronger sensations the first parents of the human race; who, when Uriel descended, were standing close to each other, with their eyes fasten'd on the Saviour, feeling through all their vital powers, some resemblance of the terror inspir'd by the angel who drove them out of Paradise. Thus, at the last day, the bless'd, struck by the trumpet's powerful clangor, the trembling earth teeming with resurrection, and their own sensations of returning life, will be lost in wonder and astonishment; but at length, friends enraptur'd, will know their friends, and brothers their brothers, whom, while absorb'd in amazement, they had not seen. So Eve, at length, took by the hand the father of men, and, with words scarce rising to sound, cry'd, Say, O Adam! what we shall do? Shall we seek some deep, some humble abyss; and there prostrate ourselves, imploring the Almighty to alleviate the pains of his death?

Adam, with a look of love, reply'd, O mother of the human race! much too mean are we to intercede for him with his Almighty Father. Were Job, Noah, Daniel, and even Eloa, the most exalted of the celestial spirits, with ardent fervor to join with us, vain would be our supplications. The dispensations of God are all

conducted by unerring wisdom—by infinite goodness. He does not see fit to interpose, and therefore, no comfort—no consolation will the Saviour receive amidst his anguish. Such are the decrees of the Almighty, whose ways are inscrutable. Ah! I am fill'd with a new idea, which perhaps flows from God. Follow me, and do what thou seest me perform.

Now, with mournful flight, they descended from the mount of Olives to the hill of death, and stopp'd at the sepulchre, where the gracious Saviour, like his brethren of the dust, was to sleep. Before the entrance of this house of death was roll'd a large and ponderous block of stone, on one side of which stood the father, and on the other the mother of the human race. The idea of the near sepulchre of the crucify'd Jesus, piercing her soul, like an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty, she sunk on the stone. Adam raising his hands, thrice utter'd, in silence, the name of the Redeemer; while, with an attentive look of mingled love and grief, he view'd his face, now more pale than that of death. Soon overcome with the sight, he sunk in the dust, and placing his sorrowful brow on his folded hands, fix'd his eyes on the ground, from which God had form'd his mortal frame, and in loud prayers rais'd his suppliant voice, while the angels, and the exalted souls of his happy descendants, heard his impassion'd orisons.

Lord God, merciful and gracious, faithful and long-suffering; who forgivest iniquity, transgression and sin, hear the fervent prayer we send up to thee from the gloomy sepulchre of thy beloved Son, who dies for our offences—who dies that man may triumph over death. Thou wilt hear us; for long have we been permitted, with rapturous joy, to see thy face, and to rejoice in thy mercy! And, O thou long-promis'd, thou dying Saviour! whom we too have beheld in thine effulgent glory, ere thou condescendest to put on that garment of flesh, and here on earth to live—to die for man. On this solemn day, in which thou restor-st to the vision of the Father, all who resist not thy gracious purpose; reconcilest man

to the obedience of the truth, and deliverest him from the punishment of sin—from that king of terrors, eternal Death, may I with humble sorrow recollect my sins! May the first of men, O my dying Saviour! while thou humblest thyself to the death of the cross, be allow'd to contemplate his forgiven offence!

Here sacred melancholy and devout transport suppress'd his utterance. Eve, silent, with expressive countenance, had accompany'd his prayer, and now added with audible voice: O thou who art devoted to death! on this day of blood—on this day, when, O my belov'd Redeemer! thy mortal frame is to lie down in the grave, let Eve, the first of women, also mention her crime, with such grace forgiven, and acknowledge it with tears of grateful love! Here she ceas'd, and Adam thus resum'd:

'Twas we began the fatal trespass; we proceeded: we completed the dire offence. O deed of horror! slight was the prohibition—how easy to perform! We receiv'd it from God, the First, the Best of Beings! our Creator! who from the dust rais'd our human frame, and gave us souls to know, and tongues to praise his goodness: who, while we were bless'd with innocence, fill'd our minds with inborn joy, and sweet sensations: who rewarded our ardent prayers with pleasing rapture; every new resolution not to taste of the fair forbidden fruit, every act of obedience before our wretched fall, with sublimest delight: who continually reminded us of his presence and sovereign wisdom, by ten thousand living creatures, whose admirable texture incessantly rewarded speculation with new discoveries, and increasing wonder: who gave to me the mother of mankind, and me to her: whose apparent glory bestow'd on us, rais'd us nearer to him, than all the surrounding creation.—Yet, presumptuous and ungrateful, we vainly strove, O thou Source of Being! to seize thy power, thy glory, and to become like thee divine.—But, gracious Father, thou hast forgiven us. Thee let us forever adore with warmest gratitude and awful love. And O thou divine Saviour of men, the Effluence of thy Father's splendor! may these suffer-

ings be repaid with glory, and honour, and affectionate obedience! May all the wide creation hail thy goodness, and all mankind proclaim thy grace!

Thus Adam gave vent to the strong sensations of his mind, and with him our general mother: he with loud voice, and she in silent thought. Then the countenance of the dying Redeemer beam'd on them divine mercy, heavenly tranquillity, and that peace of God which passeth knowledge. Enraptur'd, they felt these effusions of the Mediator's love, and the first of men fill'd with ecstatic ardor, stretching out his arms towards the cross, thus cry'd:

O my Saviour, and the Saviour of mankind, my children! thy love exceeds all thought; nor can words express my thanks; for "eternity itself is too short to utter all thy praise." Here will I stay till thou bow'st thy head in death. But amidst the pain thou sufferest for sinners, hear my supplications for my offspring—for all who shall hereafter dwell on earth. In the imperfect dawn of infant thought, may they feel thy love and lisp thy praise! O guide their blooming years; cherish the tender plants, that they may early bring forth fruit! Irradiate those, with transcendent virtue and truth divine, who, in riper age, are to enlighten the earth, and teach the ways of God to man! May the traveller never slumber in the cooling shade, or on the brink of the refreshing stream, while he loses sight of the radiant crown which God holds out from afar; and, captivated by grovelling present joys, forgets the glorious future recompence! And may all who cease to attend to the soft voice of love and grace, be call'd by affliction from the error of their ways!

O my children! my children! how inexpressible is the condescension and grace of him who dies on the cross for you! May your stony hearts be touch'd by his all-conquering love! With contrite souls may ye hear the voice of the blood which now flows from Calvary in streams of mercy and of grace!—

But what bliss pours in upon me! what joy pervades

my inmost powers! while I contemplate the glories that await the righteous dead! From them the beatific vision is before death conceal'd—They now enjoy it all—are ravish'd with ineffable delight, and with triumphant joy behold their Lord—their Saviour! Oh, when thou, after the final judgment, shall free the earth from the curse brought upon it by my sin, and shalt create it anew, blooming like Eden, then, innumerable as the sands of the sea, as the drops of the morning dew glittering in the fields, and as the stars that shine in the firmament, be the multitude of those who enter into thy glory!

Eloa now call'd with a voice that shook the solid base of Moriah, and made the courts of the temple tremble, crying, He comes, He comes. The Messenger of God then descended on Sinai. Solitary he stood, while to him the heavens and the earth seem'd to dissolve and pass away. The Eternal, who upholds all things by the word of his power, then preserv'd him from sinking, and from him terror withdrew her iron gripe: yet was he fill'd with amazement and dejection. His right hand sunk, while he, trembling, held his flaming sword, no longer shining in pale splendor; but glowing with fiery blaze, like the red lightning sent by the Almighty as the messenger of destruction. Seiz'd with reverence and awful love, at a gracious look from the divine Redeemer, he approach'd nearer, and, alighting on mount Calvary, sunk prostrate. His voice of thunder now melted into softest accents, yet was heard by the angelic circle, while he thus address'd the dying Messiah: I, a finite being, am sent by the Sovereign Judge, to fulfil his great command. O thou, the radiant image of his grace! thou Saviour of men, who now dyest that man may live forever! strengthen me, a spirit of yesterday, united to a body form'd of a midnight cloud and liquid flame. Awe and terror compass me around; yet must I execute the behests of thine Almighty Father.

He then return'd to Sinai's lofty summit; where Jehovah again array'd him in all his terrors. Dreadful he stood, pointing his sword down towards Golgotha. Be-

hind him rose a storm, the vehicle of the immortals' voice, which shook the palm groves, shook Jordan and Genazereth. Now the smoking blood of the evening sacrifice stream'd on the altar, and the immortal cry'd, Thou, O holy Saviour of men, who, condemn'd by that cruel city, hast freely consented to suffer death for sinners, thine enemies, the work of mercy and of love is completed. The cry of thy blood is ascended to the Almighty, proclaiming grace to man; and in a few moments thou wilt become the prey of Death, from whom thou shalt rise victorious; but the once-favour'd city of the Lord, which hast spilt thy blood, shall be devoted to misery, desolation and terror. The angel of death then rising in the clouds, brandish'd his flaming sword over Jerusalem, crying, A little while and thy palaces shall be overflow'd with blood, Famine shall walk through thy streets, and Desolation and Terror reign in all thy pleasant places.

Meanwhile the holy, the all-gracious Saviour, raising his drooping eyes towards Heaven, cry'd in a loud and pathetic voice, not like that of the dying, My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?—The celestial spirits, fill'd with astonishment, instantly veil'd their faces. Now all the painful sensations of the holy, the divine Jesus were redoubled, and with parch'd tongue he cry'd, I thirst. He thirsted, call'd and drank: then trembled, bled, and became still more pale. Then again lifting up his benevolent eyes, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit! and adding, It is finish'd, bow'd his gracious head and dy'd.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XI.

The Argument.

The glory of the Messiah soars from Calvary to the Holy of Holies in the temple. The earth shakes, and the veil of the temple is rent. Gabriel tells the souls of the Patriarchs that they must retire to their graves. The Messiah leaves the temple, and raises the bodies of the saints. The resurrection of Adam, Eve, Abel, Seth, Enos, Mchaleel, Jared, Kenan, Lamech, Methuselah, Noah, Japheth, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Sarah, Rebecca, Jacob, Rachel, Leu, Benjamin, Joseph, Melchisedec, Azariah, Mishael, Hananiah, Habakkuk, Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, Amos, and Job. The converted thief on the cross dies. The resurrection of Moses, David, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, Josiah, Hezekiah, Jonathan, Gideon, Elisha, Deborah, Miriam, Ezekiel, Asnath, Jeptha's daughter, the mother, and her seven martyr'd sons, Heman, Chalcol, Durda, and Ethan, Anna the prophetess, Benoni, Simeon, and John the Baptist.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XI.

IF in my religious flight I have not sunk too low; but have pour'd sublime sensations into the hearts of the redeem'd; guided by the Almighty, I have been borne on eagle's wings! O Religion! I have learn'd from revelation a sense of thy dignity! He who waits not, with devout awe, by the pure crystal stream that from the throne flows among the trees of life, may his applause, dispers'd by the winds, not reach mine ear, or, if undispers'd, not pollute my heart! Ah, among the dust had lain my song, had not you living stream pour'd from the New Jerusalem, the city of God, and thither turn'd back its course. Lead me still farther, thou Guide invisible, and direct my trembling steps. The Son's humiliation already have I sung, and let me now rise to sing his glory. May I attempt to sing the Victor's triumph, the hills and valleys yielding forth their dead, and his exaltation to the Heaven of Heavens, the throne of the Eternal Father? O thou to Heaven rais'd, hear me and help—O help me to support the terrors of thy glory!

The Eternal Redeemer now cast his eyes on the bodies of the reconcil'd dead: then look'd up to the Father; but what creature can ever feel the divine transport, the delight, the love, with which they view'd each other? Then flew night from the eternal throne; and from the sun fled the covering star. The poles of every terrestrial globe trembled, and hasted to pursue the course mark'd out by God. In haste the sun revolv'd, and the

earth follow'd till they again enter'd the track of their first orbit. Christ, the Redeemer of the world, hovers over the cross, looking down on his pale, bloody and pendant corpse. The Conqueror of Death turns, the earth trembles: He moves to the temple, the rocks burst, and, falling, spread noise and dust through the wide expanse. Instantly the sacred rays of his glory fill the Holy of Holies, and the mystery-concealing veil is, from its lofty height to its lowest border, rent. Here Jesus conferr'd with the Father, God with God, on the complete accomplishment of the great redemption. But of their thoughts the soul has no idea, language no words. The subject only, thou sacred Muse of Sion, canst unfold. Behold how night brightens into eternal day! Salvation shall be reveal'd to the nations, the forsaken temple shall perish, and the favourite people of the Most High be dispers'd among the nations. The issue of things pass'd before the eyes of the Father and Son. Religion, through a course of ages spreading among innumerable nations, and often obscur'd by the crimes and follies of man, becomes involv'd in the clouds of night, but is never totally extinguish'd. The resurrection of the redeem'd from spiritual death, the conflicts of the church militant, her victories, and the distant antipast of Heaven.

While the Father and the Son thus conferr'd, a voice, like the noise of many waters, roll'd through the listening Heavens, saying, By the eternal Father, and by him who will rise from the dead, and seat himself at the Father's right hand, ye who are now mortals shall enjoy salvation! Bliss and rapture, through a joyful eternity, shall be yours. The Eternal High Priest has redeem'd you from sin. On the altar of his death is suspended His sacred form, who has completed the sacrifice for sin, and soon will ye see the Conqueror surrounded with the effulgence of the godhead, on the throne of the Eternal, cover'd with radiant wounds. Thus through the Heavens resounded Eloa's voice. From the earth with joyful tremor, rose the voice of the first offender, saying, The Promise of God, Christ Jesus the Faithful, the

Long-suffering, the Abundant in mercy, full of Loving-kindness, has died for sinful man! O thou Shoot of Adam's stem, blossom and rise to eternal life! Rejoice, O heavens, and be glad, O earth! the All-gracious has given his only begotten Son for you! Triumph, O my sons, in your Redeemer's love, his sufferings are ended, and a better, a more glorious life awaits you above.

Jesus was still in the sanctuary. To no angel, to no patriarch had he yet reveal'd himself; but as he soar'd from gloomy Golgotha to the temple, the rustling air and trembling earth to them announc'd his presence: they saw not his glory, and still ador'd from the heights of Moriah. The idea of the Mediator's death fill'd the souls of the patriarchs, and no angelic being felt their sensations. Joy, mix'd with the tender thoughts of thy death, Heaven's most delightful solace, O thou divine Redeemer! overflow'd their souls. Soft repose, the peace of God, and the love of Jesus, illumin'd all their thoughts, and inflam'd every sensation. While the souls of the saints were absorb'd in these exquisite raptures, their effulgent lustre gradually return'd, and the celestial love they felt for each other rais'd them still higher to the beatitude of loving the Redeemer! they had all one soul, which in all was the temple of their Saviour!

Gabriel, now hasting from the mount of death, appear'd amongst them. His speech was at first obstructed by his joy at beholding the eternally redeem'd, and their voices were to him as sweet and melodious as the sounds of the celestial harps. Brethren! immortals! he at length cry'd, Scarce can I presume to call ye brethren; for your father is the father of Christ! I brought ye from the sun to this earth. Another command I have receiv'd, Repair, ye redeem'd, to your graves.

The heavenly band now dispers'd, each hasting to his tomb. By the altar, near which the earth had imbib'd Abel's blood, was still remaining a mossy rock, in which were intern'd Adam and many of his descendants. There the father of men with the devout of his race assembled.

On approaching their sepulchres, each saw the blessed spirit who, while he was on earth, had been his guardian angel, hovering round the ruins of his moulder'd tomb: but on the nearer approach of these holy souls, they upwards took their triumphant flight, while the souls of the dead were at a loss to conceive the cause of their thus soaring with hymns of triumph.

Enoch and Elijah still remain'd on the hill of death, looking with amazement at the saints who were descending to the receptacles of their mortal frames.

Noah, with Japheth and Shem, ascended to their graves on that mount where rested the ark, which, preserv'd by divine mercy, triumph'd over all the rage of the deluge.

Abraham, with his belov'd, retir'd to his sepulchre, near which he saw the heavenly traveller, in human form, whom, while unknown, he entertain'd in the friendly shade.

Moses repair'd to his solitary grave on Nebo's lofty summit, where God himself made the rock his tomb. He died in the immediate presence of the Almighty; who, before he clos'd his eyes, gave him a view of Canaan's then fertile land. The rocks at the presence of the Omnipotent, rent under the lifeless body; it sunk down; the trembling rock clos'd, and thus he lay interr'd by the hand of God.

Nearer to Golgotha came to their graves those disciples of Moses who, arm'd with the thunder of eloquence, and psalms prophetic of future salvation, rescu'd Abraham's race from Idolatry's iron chains.

Horror encompass'd the fields of the sacred graves, and affrighted back every mortal foot that presum'd to approach; but the angels, as if only destin'd to converse with spirits of the saints, return'd from the clouds. Adam had enter'd his grave, with his belov'd, and addressing her, thus gave vent to his amazement: Thou, I saw, didst observe the devout awe which I felt at the divine command; but now, O Eve, rejoice with me, that we are esteem'd worthy, while the sacred body of the Lord

of Life sleeps in death, to be, with him, humbled in the grave. How transporting the thought of being humbled with the Eternal Son of the Father! Let me also exult, that in the day of judgment, he will descend to Eden, and I shall here awake, and ye, my children, with me! Here from death we shall awake! all that now sleep in the silent grave, for all eternity shall awake! All my numberless devout children shall receive bodies that are glorify'd—spiritualiz'd! O the unutterable beatitude which the great Jehovah has graciously allotted for us! How hast thou, O death of the Redeemer, exalted us! what bliss has it procur'd! Thou Enoch, and thou Elijah, shew how worthy a resurrection from death is of the longing desires of an immortal. Delay not then, thou last of days, that for this bliss we may long no more!—Yet, rather delay, that multitudes may be added to the multitudes that shall then rise from the grave to eternal life! Thus spake Adam, in blissful raptures, while his listening associate also dwelt on the gladdening thought of their joint humiliation with the gracious Redeemer, and on the earth's final day.

Now from the foot of the mount to the temple's lofty pinnacles, Moriah trembled. Clouds issuing from the sanctuary, roll'd through the court of the temple, then rose towards Heaven. Wherever the awful clouds turn'd, the earth shook, the rocks rent, and the rivers swell'd. The clouds becoming resplendent, spread over the graves, and a loud wind rush'd from under the tombs; but the power of the Eternal Son was not in the storm: the earth around the graves shook; but the omnipotence of the Redeemer was not in the trembling earth: flashes issu'd from the clouds; but the Lord was not in the flames: then from the Heavens descended a soft and gentle breeze, and in this gentle breeze was the omnipotence of the Son. Behold at his command, sweet insensibility came like slumber in the cooling shade. The patriarchs knew not what was to happen; but their sensations, though dimm'd, perceiv'd the present Deity in the ambient breeze. Meanwhile, transported with fraternal

joy, the angels look'd down viewing the fields of the resurrection.

Adam now cry'd, I shall be again created! created anew! and strove to rise, yet still he kneel'd in the dust, while the cherubims and seraphims, striking their harps, thus sang: Be thou anew and forever created. Behold on the darkest of thy days thou diedst. Oh, hail the first! awake, and live a life, O Adam, more sweet than thou enjoyedst at thy first creation; and now no more to die! Adam, with dimm'd sight, still kneel'd in the dust. The ethereal form in which, since his death, his never-dying soul had been cloth'd, became mix'd with his risen glorify'd body, and swiftly rising, he stood erect, with his arms stretch'd towards Heaven, crying, O joy unutterable! thou hast call'd me out of the dust, and I know of a truth, that thou, O my Redeemer! hast created me more glorious than in Eden! O that I could find thee, my Redeemer! that I could find the Almighty! How would I prostrate myself before him, and pour out my adorations! But thou art ever near, though unseen! This celestial murmur is the voice of thy presence! Even those around me now awake! Look down, ye angels, and see around the father of men, his holy children rise.

Eve now arose, and looking round, cry'd, Where have I been? Where am I? Am I in Eden? I again dwell in my original mansion, once dissolv'd! There, O there is Adam! how effulgent!—How effulgent am I! O thou whose wounds I have seen! where art thou, O thou Restorer of Innocence, that I may pour out my praises before thee! Adam hasted to her, and she to him. In a transport they embrac'd, joy stopp'd their voice, and they could only stammer forth the name of him who had rais'd them from the dead.

Abel! my son Abel! cry'd Adam; for Abel hover'd there like the vernal morn, cloth'd in radiant purple. O my son, added he, with what affection, with what grace and glory has the Redeemer bless'd us! These bodies were earthy, when we laid them down in our kindred dust; but what are they now?

Above all that we could think or ask, said Abel, O father, has he done for us, who has put away our sins, and the sins of the world! O celestial repose! all shall, like us, at the last day, awake!

Enos found himself by Seth, Mehaleel, Jared, Kenan, and Noah's father, and with them was Methuselah. He found them encompass'd with glory, on their trembling graves, fill'd with new life, in celestial bodies, more fit companions of their immortal souls. These shining frames seem'd almost endu'd with thought, and full of the presence of God. As after the creation the morning stars sang together, so the sons of Adam hover'd, uttering effusions of grateful praise and joy, and the field of the resurrection resounded with the transports of the reviving dead.

Noah, the second father of mankind, felt his new creation, and was awak'd in the soft breeze of the evening twilight. A rosy cloud flow'd from the shoulders of the immortal as he rose. Ye angels, he cry'd, O tell me, has a body, like that of Adam in Paradise, been form'd for me? Ah, where are we? Say, where is he who has thus created me, that I may prostrate myself with you, and join your adorations? Then seeing Japheth and Shem rise from their graves, he added, O my sons! where is he who has rais'd our bodies from the dead, that we may haste to prostrate ourselves before him, and pour forth our devout thanksgivings? Tell me, ye other sons of the resurrection, where, O where is he who has fill'd you with celestial fire, that we may kneel, and with our feeble lips pour forth our imperfect praise?

As the pious man, who in all things seeks and finds God his Creator, on beholding through the breathing grove, the sun rising in his beauty, is fill'd with soft rapture, from its being a testimony of the glory of God; so Abraham's guardian angel beheld the father of the faithful arise from his tomb, bless'd, glorify'd and immortal. Abraham laying his hand on his mouth, and looking towards Heaven, wrapp'd in astonishment and self-consideration, at length thus gave vent to his amazement:

Am I again created? How wonderful, how gracious, O my Saviour, are the consequences of thy death! This new life, to which thou hast rais'd us from dust, O bless'd Redeemer! flows from thy sufferings. This incorruptible body, the nobler consort of my soul, thou hast given me before the dissolution of nature. Oh, who am I, who am I, that thou conferrest on me such felicity? Thus he exclaim'd and wept, fill'd with gratitude and joy.

Isaac came. Him Abraham thought a young seraph adorn'd with ethereal radiance, and those smiling blushes of the morning that cover the bright inhabitants of Heaven, and cry'd, Didst thou see me, O resplendent angel! rais'd from the dead, and at the divine command, my consum'd bones revive?

O Abraham, my father! he return'd, once didst thou believe that had I been consum'd by the altar, my ashes would revive, and I should again be restor'd to life. My body, O best of fathers! is now restor'd. How amazing is the Redeemer's goodness! His sacred body is still suspended on the cross; yet ours rise, and we enjoy these raptures! I sunk as in sleep, a celestial breeze blow'd around me, and I found myself wrapp'd in a resplendent cloud.

Enraptur'd came Sarah and Bethuel's daughter to their beloved. With eyes lift up to them, and then to Heaven, stood the father and the son. Long stood they speechless, while their souls glow'd with everlasting gratitude and triumphant praise.

Israel came exulting, and while his full soul pour'd forth grateful tears from his now immortal eyes, he cry'd, Hallelujah to the Mediator, the Conqueror of Death! Oh thou hast bled—thou hast completed our redemption—thou hast call'd us out of the valley of death!

Meanwhile the seraphs were not silent, their hymns accompanying the joyful acclamations of the righteous patriarchs: Praise and glory, said they, be to him that revives the dead, to the divine Giver of this eternal life, which now blossoms from the tombs. Rejoice, O Heaven! at thy future inhabitants!

Israel now turning his eyes from them to Golgotha, cry'd, I will join my thanksgivings with those of all the celestial choirs, when thou shalt soar from thy tomb; when the belov'd shall see thee their Redeemer on the throne of glory, in the lustre that was thine ere the earth was form'd. Are you, ye angels, like me? Ye are not. You have not, like me, dy'd, believing in him. You have not felt the joys of the resurrection. The Redeemer laid down his life for man; and, like man, will revive. Ye blessed spirits, join with us in adoring him; but we will love him more!

He then, casting his eyes from Heaven to the earth, saw his belov'd Joseph. An angel was at the tomb of Rachel, standing aloft on the pendant rock. She look'd up to him with cordial affection, while he smiling look'd down on her, with a countenance of the sweetest friendship. My tomb, O seraph! said she, is solitary—Rachel, he answer'd, the sepulchre in which the divine Redeemer will soon be laid, is also solitary—Alas, she return'd, how has he suffer'd, whose earthly form a tomb in Golgotha will soon inclose! Oh, what has his condescension and death obtain'd for us! The time will come when my body shall awake from sleep, when my bones, long moulder'd in the dust, shall rise. Even for me has the Saviour obtain'd a resurrection.

While she was yet speaking a vapour arose round her feet in the tomb, fine as the breath of the rose, or of the vernal leaf dropping silver. Rachel's radiance tinges the rising vapour with gold, as the sun gilds the skirts of an evening cloud, while her eye follows the undulating vapour, which in various forms waves around her, rising, falling, and drawing still nearer and more lucid. She admires the deep wisdom shewn in the ever-varying creation, equally unfathomable in what is great, and what is small, without knowing the near affinity between her and the bright curling cloud, or to what thine Almighty voice, O thou Redeemer! would soon reduce it. She then, leaning in the midst of the radiant dust, stood musing with joyful look.

With folded hands stood her angel, viewing what pass'd with transport too exquisite for speech. Now was heard the omnipotent voice, and Rachel sinking down, seem'd to herself as if dissolving in tears of joy, in some shady vale by a fountain side; then appear'd as if lightly rising to a flowery plain refresh'd by a gentle breeze, and then as if new created amidst the fragrance-breathing flowers. Awaking from her short trance, she suddenly rises, she feels, she sees, she knows that she has a new immortal body. Enraptur'd she raises her eyes to Heaven, and thanks him who call'd her forth from death. O Jesus, my brother, my Lord, and my Saviour, she cries, ever shall thy name be first on my lips, then your's, Israel, Joseph, Benjamin!—My Lord and my God! Where am I? Lead me, O seraph, lead me, that I may see the Adorable, that I may see Israel and my children! My soul pants after them; with them will I rejoice in the glories of the resurrection.

Israel beheld her, and also Leah, with her son, who come from the banks of the Nile. Benjamin was likewise there; but Joseph still absent. The heavenly Joseph still hover'd over his sepulchre at Sichem. Samed, one of the children whom the Mediator had kiss'd and bless'd, was with him; he was lately dead, and just knew himself to be an heir of eternal Life. His guardian angel had conducted him to Haman's pastures, where he perceiv'd Joseph hovering over his grave, and thus address'd the angel: Who, my heavenly guide, is that radiant form, with looks so sweet and mild, and yet so full of dignity?

Joseph, with a smile of benignity and temper'd effulgence, thus began an endearing conversation. Thou flower that now wilt grow in the shade of the tree of life, and near the crystal stream that flows from the throne, know that I was once, like thee, a happy child, till injuries involv'd me in miseries that were succeeded by great prosperity, and I became the father of nations. Knowest thou, happy child, the son of Israel and Rachel?

O thou immortal, the sons of Jacob and Rachel! oft

have I wept with joy while I have heard my father tell me the wonderful story of Joseph. Yet allay thy splendor, O Joseph! allay thy lustre, then will I venture to talk with thee. The joy of seeing thee is worth all the pangs of death, and I would again bear those painful struggles from which I am but just deliver'd, to see and converse with thee. I seem'd awhile ago to sink into nothing; but from this dream of endless night my angel awak'd me, by telling me I liv'd, and should live forever.

O early blessed soul, how little hast thou suffer'd of the calamities of life! What a recompence hast thou receiv'd, in being so soon a companion of the heirs of bliss, and of those that stand higher than I in the steps of salvation!

O Joseph! O son of Israel! scarce can I bear the radiance thou hast so sweetly soften'd.

Soon wilt thou learn, O Samed! soon wilt thou see Abraham! The bless'd disencumber'd from their house of clay soon learn.

Gladly will I learn; O teach me, thou son of Israel. Even the earthly life I have just left is not without some heavenly intervals. How was it with thee in that delightful moment, when, no longer able to conceal thine affection, thou calledst out, so loud that the distant Egyptians heard thee, I am Joseph! Is my father still living? Then thy brothers—then the eyes of thy younger brother Benjamin gaz'd upon thee, and thou saidst, Make known to my father all the glory I enjoy in Egypt; and throwing thine affectionate arms about thy dear Benjamin's neck, thou shedst a flood of tears, and in thine embrace, Benjamin's tears express'd his joy! Oh in that hour what didst thou feel! When thy father receiv'd the news, the heart of the good old man struggled with different thoughts, and he doubted the truth, till he heard thy words and saw the waggons of Pharaoh. Then his troubled soul reviv'd: It is enough, he cry'd, Joseph, my son, still lives! I will haste and see him before I die! When he came near, how didst thou run to him, and long continue in his embraces! O let me now die, said he; I

have seen thy face, and thou art yet alive! What, O Joseph, didst thou feel in those heavenly hours?

Come thou, who art also Israel's son, and my brother; younger still than was my Benjamin, come and embrace me.—Samed trembling embraced him, and they long wept celestial tears. How it was with me, Samed, thou thyself felt, when thou recall'dst to me the joyful history of those tears I shed on earth. By this remembrance thou hast enhanc'd the joys of Heaven, and I shall offer the Giver of those blessings new thanks, and more ardent praise than while confin'd to this earth.

I will also, O Joseph! learn of thee to offer up my ardent thanksgivings. But why dost thou remain at this tomb?

Know'st thou, O immortal! that the divine Jesus is dead? He commanded us who were round the cross, to repair to our graves. This is mine. We are to humble ourselves with the gracious, the deceas'd Messiah; and in silent thought, amidst the spoils of mortality, meditate on the redemption he has procur'd; for by his death and resurrection, we shall be freed from death, and at the last day our bodies will awake.

Here then, will Joseph awake. O that my friends would bring here my remains, then should I awake near thee! Let us descend into the tomb, and see the vesture that once cover'd thine immortal spirit, the dust that will at length arise.

Come then, Samed, said Joseph, taking him by the hand, and leading him to the darkest part of the tomb, where they found Joseph's angel, in whose countenance were blended expectation, joy and solicitude.

I see, O seraph! that thou rejoicest that he will soon awake.

I rejoice at his exaltation, O Joseph! who will ever increase in glory, and who rewards the expectation with new and never-ceasing raptures. If thou hast been pleas'd with a field cover'd with the vivid products of the spring, and with the flowers continually rising under thy feet, amidst those with which thou hast been most delighted,

one still sleeps in the gladsome field, which thou wilt expect with solicitous joy.

What new felicity, O seraph! dost thou mean?

O thou immortal and still mortal, behold the favour that awaits thee!—The earth now spontaneously rose in clouds, and sunk on the side of the sepulchral rock; where Joseph's guardian angel hover'd, remain'd a gentle waving dust, which rose and sunk in swift succession, the pregnant dust shining resplendent. Draw near and behold in the earth, said Joseph's angel, how gloriously the first sparks of life begin.

A soft murmur now rose in the cloud-fill'd grave. Samed's golden locks wav'd, and Israel's son, at the near approach of the radiant dust which once form'd his bones, return'd the murmuring sound. Hastily proceeded the new creation. The angel and Samed saw what was done; but while it was doing the dust chang'd, and Joseph, with his risen body, stood before them, and lifting up his voice, said, O thou angel of the covenant, who in a flame by night, and in a cloud by day, led the Israelites from Egyptian bondage through the Red Sea to Canaan, while the tyrant perish'd, now perishes Death, a greater tyrant. But Israel is in the field of Ephron, and Rachel with him; Abraham is also there. Thus he spake, and darted with redoubled radiance from the tomb, while the angel and Samed, speechless through joy, follow'd his rapid flight. Soon he pass'd by Mamre's sacred grove, and join'd his father and brethren. Oh who is so skill'd in the sounds of the celestial harps, as to express the joy of this second meeting of the father and the son, in which the brothers knew the brother? or the sweet sensations of the mother, at beholding her first-born? His dream reach'd even into the eternal life, and his brethren, now free from envy, bow'd before his superior splendor, adoring the Giver of more exalted favours.

A traveller had found Melchisedek, Salem's priest and king, lying on his face near the fountain of Phiala, and with respectful awe had bury'd him in the earth. Over his grave now hover'd Melchisedek. While the spring's

soft melodious murmurs overflow'd his soul with pleasing melody, and he seem'd to hear the voice of the Almighty jointly with the crystal stream that runs through the heavenly Jerusalem, and passes by the tree of Life, he sunk deep in the raptures of soft repose; the heavens and the earth appear'd to pass away; but God and himself remain'd. At length he rais'd himself from the earth, but again sunk down in silence, yet his eyes were fill'd with quivering tears, and with folded hands he invok'd Jesus the Mediator.

On a plain appear'd, O sight terrific and execrable! those who at the sound of the loud cornet, the soft flute, the sweet sackbut, the melodious harp, and the rattling cymbol, had fallen prostrate before the shining image. In a rock on this plain, the devout Azariah, Mishael and Hananiah, had hewn their tombs, and near the sepulchres of these pious and heroic believers, lay the vestiges of the splendid image, a mass of ruins. Once had that king, whom the Lord cast down from the palaces of Babylon to feed among the beasts of the field, erected it in height reaching to the clouds, as he had seen it in his dream, and near it realms overthrown lay in awful ruins. Mishael and Hananiah interr'd Azariah rejoicing. Thee, Hananiah, the lonely Mishael plac'd in his tomb, pleas'd with the thought of his own approaching death. His eye now seeks in their sepulchre the dust of the deceas'd; yet there, though immortal, he sought in vain. Then, animated with the most joyful hopes, he darted upwards, and pour'd forth the joy of his soul, while the melody of his voice descended to his belov'd friends, and rose up to Heaven.

We shall at length, he sang, come forth from these graves! How wide soever, O Corruption! thou scatterest our dust, whether it floats, O Ocean! in thy roaring abyss, or it hovers, O Sun! in thy rays! the Omnipotent will assemble the dust once inhabited by immortal souls. Over it will he stand, and order it to be inform'd with new life. The Almighty took the dust of the ground, and to the trembling earth said, Become thou

the body of man. He spake, and it obey'd: thus he will take the dust of corruption, and again command it to form a body. Hallelujah! Then will our dust awake. The streams will roar, the storms rise, the sea boil, the earth tremble, the heavens thunder, and night be involv'd in ten-fold darkness; but louder than the noise of all will the trumpet sound to awake the dead!

He who saw thy steeds, O Chaldea! swift as the leopard, or as the eagle in quest of prey: he who beheld thy horsemen assemble captives as the sand, while they laugh'd at princes, and made a mock of kings; their leader drunk with his own rage, which was as insatiable as the grave: He who saw the Avenger in the terrible glory with which he came from Paran, when before him walk'd the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet; when he stood and measur'd the earth, how far the destroying angel should pass: the hills then sunk before him, the mountains were scatter'd, and the rivers hastily fled: the deeps sunk down, and the heights lifted up their hands. Ye sun and moon then stood still; his arrows flew glittering, and his spears as the blaze of lightning. Habakkuk, who thus saw the great Helper in Judah, the Rewarder in his glory, now rais'd from the grave, touch'd his harp with the softest melody, while he sang, The figtree blossoms! there is fruit in the vine! the gladdening labour of the olive fills the vallies! the immortal seed shoots up on high an eternal harvest, ripening radiant in the smiling field! Heaven, O Lord, is full of thy praise, the earth of thy glory! Thou didst think on us, O thou who art most merciful, when we drank the cup of death, and had seen corruption; therefore will I rejoice in thee my Deliverer, and through eternity, joy in the God of my salvation.

As when the whole expanse of the heavens is shrouded in clouds, and the intent eye of encreasing expectation is fix'd upward, when the flame of the Lord darts at once from the heavens, and storms of thunder proclaim the glory of the Almighty, thus Isaiah threw aside the night of death, shone radiant over his grave, and pour'd forth

his thanks to his all-gracious Creator, who had rais'd him from the dust.

Amidst the ruins of great Babylon, built by Nebuchadnezzar in ostentation of his grandeur, where the holy watchman with tremendous voice denounc'd, Thy kingdom is departed from thee, and thy dwelling shall be among the beasts of the field; among these solitary ruins lay the remains of Daniel, whom God had irradiated with his illuminations, and who now sought his grave, calling to a seraph to assist his search. He hover'd above, amidst the cry of night birds, the hiss of serpents, and the ruins of palaces, where the Arab had no cottage, nor his slave a dwelling. Instantly the angel found the grave encompass'd with water and slime, and a mossy tomb-stone rose among the waving reeds. The soul of Daniel here recollected the fate of many who had long slept in death; of him whose front, like a lofty wide-spreading tree, rose high towards Heaven, an extensive shade to the weary; but fell at the divine command, Hew it down. He learn'd wisdom from this chastisement; but not so his son; he, of more obdurate pride, consider'd not that God has power over the nations; therefore was the hand seen near the golden branch, writing the sentence of death, Know, O king! the years of thy power are number'd and accomplish'd: thou art weigh'd in the balance, and art found wanting: thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.—Then the proud mountain and its confederate hills sunk in the day of desolation. The resplendent form of the holy Daniel quick descended into the grave; but soon arose, and as the morning star beams through the heavens, darted his rays on Babylon's solitary ruins.

Hilkiah's gentle son had sow'd in tears; but now reap'd elevated joy. He stood on his grave, sensible of his new life, fill'd with rapturous thoughts of his complete and perfect immortality.

The herdsman of Tekoa, who among the cottages of simplicity, knew him who plac'd Arcturus and Orion high in the heavens, had seen the plains a scene of cala-

mity, and the top of Carmel wither'd; the palaces of Kirioth devour'd by fire; Moab and Kirioth die with tumult, shouting, and the sound of a trumpet. In the fields of Judah he had beheld confusion and death; the altar of Bethel, and the palaces of the mighty fall: the rage of famine; the heavens yielding no rain; the sword devour the youth, and pestilence prey on the dead. Amos, fill'd with sympathy, had removed from the sights of these miseries to the peaceful grave; but now awak'd in an immortal body, to behold the salvation accomplish'd by the Redeemer, the heavens no longer iron, nor thirst known to those who had panted after the knowledge of the Holy One of Israel.

Job's tomb was encompass'd with cool shades, and his soul hover'd in the waving grove. Now the rock in which it was hewn sunk down before him, and from it rose clouds of undulating dust, that flash'd radiance; a dust and radiance he had never before seen. While fix'd in deep attention, and rejoicing at this new appearance, he sunk in raptures amidst the splendid dust. His angel then beholding him under the Almighty's forming hand, pour'd forth the fulness of his joy, with a lofty voice that shook the grove and the neighbouring rocks. This Job himself perceiv'd, who being now created anew, ecstatic tears of rapturous joy flow'd from his eyes, and he cry'd, with a voice that also shook the grove and rocks, Holy, holy, holy is He that is, and was, and is to come!

The sky about Golgotha was still cover'd with gloom, and round the cross the clouds of night shrouded the eminences and vales, through the whole scene of the divine sacrifice, as far as the human eye could reach. The sacred corpse was now stiff, the head sunk, and the temples, press'd with the crown of insult, stain'd with clotted blood, which ceas'd to call on the Judge for pardon and grace, and to raise its voice to the Heaven of Heavens, crying to the Father for mercy! The body hung lifeless on the lofty cross, without a tear, without its trembling voice. Around the cross the softest whisper of the air was silent, and the hill became a solitude almost forsaken

by man. So lies a field of battle, left by the souls of the dead.

The repentant thief now look'd with fix'd, though dim eyes, on the body of the breathless Redeemer: Thou art dead! cry'd he, with a low tremulous voice, thou art dead! I am left alone in this tormenting death! Gladly will I suffer—gladly will I suffer all with patience; but do not Thou forsake me!—Yet God forsook thee! O mystery profound! I saw thee with thy face lift up to Heaven, when with a loud voice thou cry'd'st, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? and while I heard, Heaven and Earth vanish'd from my sight, and a fresh stream of warm blood issu'd from my veins. I thought myself dying. O my God, look down upon me with pity! Such were his thoughts when a divine illumination pour'd into his soul.

The high priest had prevail'd on Pilate not to defer putting Jesus to death till the malefactors expir'd, lest the passover should be defil'd by their hanging on the cross. Accordingly a slave came in haste with orders from Pilate to the centurion, who having given the word, the next to him laid hold of a club, stain'd with the blood of many of the crucify'd dead, and approach'd the cross, follow'd by his companions. Then, with nervous arm, he swung it over his head, and crying with a terrific voice, Die, villain, struck the blow, which broke the malefactor's bones, while the cross shook, and sent forth a jarring sound. This the repentant criminal heard, and joyfully predicted his own approaching death. The Roman then turn'd, and stood opposite the middle cross, when looking up, he trembled, and fancy'd he saw the vengeful gods hovering round. Terrify'd he stepp'd to the convert, who look'd down upon him with pleas'd eye. To put a speedy end to his torture the executioner exerted all his strength, striking his legs with such force, that the bones were shatter'd, and Golgotha trembled. He now, once more, but with slow step, advanc'd to the middle cross, and, standing still, view'd the pendant body; then call'd out to the centurion, This man is already

dead. I know it, he answer'd, but take a spear and pierce his heart; then turn'd aside with his eyes fix'd on the ground. Soon the executioner rais'd the glittering spear, and, drawing back, push'd it with redoubled force into the sacred corpse, and from the wound issu'd blood and water.

How, as through a mist, the languishing eyes of the dying convert beheld the blood and water trickling from the Most Holy. His soul struggling to free itself from his body, rais'd to Heaven thoughts inarticulate and impassion'd—Ah, now—now be merciful even to me!—O by thy blood—by thy death, which now for all—By thy death on that cross, be merciful!—Thou, Golgotha, my grave, wast his altar!—Ah, crush'd bones, exult in your corruption, here shall ye moulder.

Abdiel now drawing near, view'd him as he hover'd round with gentle flight, and the countenance of the immortal shone with brighter lustre, while he thus utter'd his final benediction: Source of Life, Giver of Mercies, more exalted than the tongues of men or of angels are able to express, oh be with him, and in this dark valley of death pour into his mind the joys of the celestial life, a delightful foretaste of the consummation of blessedness.

The departing soul then utter'd these impassion'd thoughts: Thou Love! thou eternal Love!—O my freed soul, cease thine efforts! in vain thou striv'st to express thy thanks! O Lord God, merciful and gracious, who forgivest iniquity, transgression and sin, into thine hands—Ah, ye bands of Paradise, how ye wave your palms!—O Lord, merciful and gracious, into thine hands I commend—Ah, now no longer delay—no longer delay! This reconcil'd, justify'd, highly favour'd soul! O my Saviour! into thine hands I commend.

He then expir'd. Together with the soul, the finest parts of the body left the corpse, to become the vesture of the immortal spirit: Is this death? said the transported soul. O happy separation! what shall I call thee? Not death; no more shalt thou be call'd by that dreadful name! and thou corruption, so fearful to thought, how

soon art thou become my joy! Slumber then, thou my companion in the past life; fall to dust, as seed sown by the hand of God, to ripen for the general harvest! O corruption, what a different life do I now enjoy! this has no death! this can know no end!

Now no longer did Abdiel conceal his radiant form. He saw the soul of the new immortal cloth'd like himself in celestial splendor, and advanc'd towards him, irradiated with the joy of the most intimate love, brighten'd by his seeing him now deliver'd. The repentant, pardon'd soul, hasted to meet him, crying, Servant of the Most High, for that thou art one of the bless'd of God, thy dignity and unsully'd brightness declar'd to me, when my fix'd eyes saw thee from afar; then the melodious sound of thy wings fill'd me with transport, and chas'd away dread and pain. Yet still do I tremble before thee; but this trembling is ecstatic rapture. Abdiel answer'd, Come thou first of the dead, the first reconcil'd by the sacrifice of the blest Redeemer; thou who turn'dst late to God, and first pour'd out thy soul to him when confin'd in prison; thou the hope of future sinners, come, oh come; for now will be accomplish'd the Mediator's glorious promise: come, I will conduct thee to the joys of Paradise! He then wing'd his rapid flight, follow'd by the transported soul.

He whose face shone when he descended from the presence of the Eternal, with such lustre that the people were unable to view him till he cover'd it with a veil: he who doubting that the rock would not instantly pour forth a spring of water, was permitted only to see Canaan from Nebo's lofty summit, now hover'd alone, absorb'd in thought, over his solitary grave, no angel present; for none had he, in the life of probation, who, without dying, saw the glory of God pass by: but before him a resplendent cloud hover'd over the dust in which he had liv'd. O Pharaoh, said he, long is it since thy bones, and those of thy drow'd host, whiten'd the sedgy shore. Oh how the walls of the sea fell! how the storm rush'd from the fiery column! How Egypt sunk in death! Even

there, on this side, beyond the hills, did the cloud and fiery pillar lead us. There did God strike thee, O Amalek, while my arms were extended towards Heaven, and on their sinking Israel suffer'd. There the bush burnt, the place to me was holy.—Oh rock! why didst thou delay thy refreshing stream?—That is Sinai, the mount of thunder, and the sound of a trumpet!—Great art thou, O Wilderness, the spacious grave of all whom the Almighty conducted through the Red Sea!—Nebo is mine—but lofty Gerizim and Golgotha's altar are not there!

Golgotha's bloody altar, pregnant with salvation, now sang the angels by whom the Eternal sent the covenant of the law. They sang on Nebo's summit, which was irradiated by their presence. They hover'd round the grave of Moses, and touching their golden harps, chanted with sweetest harmony: We immortals have not the blessings of Gerizim; but those of Calvary are ours! Moses, thou God of Aaron, why delays thy body? O dust, shake off thy rest, and at the Redeemer's call rise into life. Amidst the soothing sounds of the celestial harps, the dust of Moses continu'd sleeping; but at the trumpet's death-awakening clangor, Nebo and the opening grave shook. The glorify'd Moses then arose, but instantly sunk down, and worshipp'd kneeling. Long ascended his thanksgivings, long his praise, no angel now supporting his up-lift arms.

Even the sepulchres of the kings trembled. The dust of David awak'd, as if satiated with bliss, in the glorious image of the incorruptible, whose resurrection waited for a more exalted triumph, as the first fruits among the dead. The bright spirit of Jesse's son descended into the dark vault, and perceiv'd near his remains the soul of Solomon. The son was astonish'd, and the unawaken'd wonder'd at the risen. Then hasted the angels and the risen to the sepulchre, crying, They rise from the dead! —Yes, we rise from the dead, said Abraham, in a transport of joy. Our dry bones hear the voice of the Lord. We awake immortal, so he himself shall awake. ⊛

David, the father of the holy Jesus, thou art chosen to flourish round the cedar of God, an ever-verdant tree in the heavenly Paradise, and thy branches to wave amidst celestial breezes, with thy top piercing the clouds.

Mourn not, thou soul of Solomon, said Gabriel; mourn not, thou highly favour'd; thou shalt not be cloth'd with thy dust, when the cedars of God shade the first fruits of the spring.

Shall I mourn, he return'd, I whom Heaven crowns with such exalted favours? I who have committed such errors, while I am permitted to see the glories of redeeming love? Rest my crumbled bones till the great day, when this vault shall no longer be able to contain you. Rise as a vapour in the mild coolness of the evening, under the shining moon, till the instant before it shall cease to give light to mortals.

Gabriel and the risen, now leaving the sepulchres of the kings, soar'd to Mamre's groves, and to the risen within its shades.

Asa, who, by the terrors of the Lord, conquer'd the innumerable host of Zerah, rose. He likewise, who preaching to the people, travelled through Judea, attended by his princes and the priests of the Lord; to him the Almighty gave unparallel'd prosperity: for Jehoshaphat led his army against the enemy in sacred attire, with psalms and hymns and shouts of exultation: not to battle, but to adore their Almighty Protector, who destroyed their enemies, and cover'd the plain with the dead. Uzziah also awak'd in his solitary tomb, and in the royal sepulchre, his son, with Josiah, devout youth, ever mild and gracious, and the destroyer of idols: Him the men and women singers bewail'd! the Benjamites, whose tears, like wine, flow'd over Salem's ruins, bewail'd him in plaintive song. They lamented him fallen by Necho's shafts. These all rose at once, and like resplendent rays darted through the heavens.

Hezekiah was not yet risen. Nisroch, an angel of the abyss that once animated an idol, now slowly mov'd with the ghost of Sennacherib, from the summit of Le-

banon. Nisroch had been order'd to bring the conqueror from Hell to the sepulchres of the kings of Judah. Who compels me, cry'd Sennacherib, with impetuous voice, to visit the hated earth?

O Sennacherib, said the infernal spirit, had not the order been given by an angel of death, I would have disobey'd. Thou heardst him speak with the voice of thunder. Who can support the terrors of these irresistible spirits? Thou, weak and pusillanimous, on whose altar victims have bled, must appear as a bleeding victim before this terrible angel of death. Thou, pusillanimous, must fly at his command! Thou pride-swell'd conqueror, haste and bow thyself in the dust of the kings of Judah! Fly, thou reviler of the Mighty one, lest he put a bit in thy mouth, and drag thee through the countries thou hast ravag'd.

Sennacherib hasted, and the two spectres of the abyss soon enter'd the tomb where the soul of Hezekiah and his guardian angel continu'd hovering.—Wherefore, O angel, said the bless'd spirit, are these accurs'd come to profane my tomb?—Thou will soon know, reply'd the angel. This is Sennacherib, with his idol deity!—Sennacherib, know'st thou this resplendent spirit?—How should I, wretched that I am, know all the sons of felicity?—Wretched indeed, resum'd the angel, and more wretched for thine impieties. This is he who humbly prostrated himself in the dust before him whom thou blasphemedst, who made God his refuge and his confidence, when thine hosts, as a mighty torrent, advanc'd against him. What judgments smote thee on earth thou knowest, and now this follows; He, O Sennacherib, whom thou thought'st almost beneath thy contempt, and didst insult the Omnipotent, on whose protection this magnanimous prince rely'd, thou shalt behold in new glory.

Does his glory then increase? cry'd Sennacherib. O let me fly to my abyss! What is Hezekiah or everlasting light to me, the companion of the darkest gloom? Let me, O tyrant of Heaven, fly.

Thou canst not escape the judgments of God. Here rests his dust, thine lies under the ruins of Nineveh. It shall also awake, but dark and wretched. How different wilt thou appear from him thou wilt now behold!

Terror and dismay seized the bloody conqueror of nations, at seeing the grave of the exalted Hezekiah tremble, and at his being speedily array'd in new glory. Now, curse, thou blasphemer, curse, thou scorner, the great Awakener of the dead, cry'd Hezekiah, shining with effulgent lustre. Why dost thou delay? Curse him in thine infernal abyss. Sennacherib stood rooted in the rocks of the tomb, rage himself impeding his flight. Hezekiah then rising in the air, call'd from above: Behold another kind of scorn than thy flight into the temple of Nisroth, where thy sons waited for thee, with swords prepar'd for unnatural murder; Sion's celestial daughter shews thee the golden crown of salvation, and the heavenly Jerusalem shakes her head at thee, thou humbled destroyer. Ah, whom has thine impious presumption despis'd? Against whom hast thou lifted up thine arrogant eyes and blasphemous voice? Here Sennacherib fled, with his demon, to the infernal abyss.

David hasted to Kish, where was the tomb of Jonathan, who viewing him with pleasure, cry'd, Is it thee, my David? With such splendor none have appear'd but Enoch and Elijah. O thou father of the great Redeemer, how gloriously art thou chang'd!—The dust in my sepulchre mov'd, and behold I arose! Thou likewise, my Jonathan, shalt arise. Even I have risen from the dead, and hast thou sinn'd like me? No: but though I had been as pious as David, I was not the father of the Messiah. Alas! how little do I deserve, and what thanks do I owe to the Giver of all good, for being thought worthy to descend from Heaven to behold the blessed Jesus! O David, I have seen him die, and mine eyes shall also behold his exaltation and triumph! I am bless'd also, O my David, in seeing thee! Sadness had hover'd round me on this grave, where none of my fathers nor my brothers were with me. Do not Saul's remains rest

here?—Yet do not thou, O my Jonathan, complain.—No, David, rather would I cease to be! Has not God made me an heir of light? Yet on my father's dust let me, without complaining, drop one tear. Jonathan's angel then call'd, Dry up that tear, which too late thou shed'st. Dry it up, and weep no more. Scarce had he call'd, with a voice like the sound of the celestial Hallelujah, when Jonathan sunk into a sweet and rapturous slumber, and soon awaking, stood before David in absolute immortality. He who had heard David's and Jonathan's lofty hymns ascend to the throne, then heard their sublime discourse, and knew the thoughts that surpass'd their utterance.

Gideon, who refus'd the crown offer'd him by Judah, soar'd up in the lustre of immortality. Not so, when the loud trump shall call the sons of God to judgment, shall they shine, who owe their blood-stain'd diadems to direful conquest: or those who wantonly pollute their reigns with slaughter, in which innocence and virtue bleed. The cry of their blood will reach the ear of the mighty Judge, and when he comes he will listen to the sound.

Now awak'd the dead bones of Elisha, himself the awakener of the dead, and quitting his grave in crimson radiance, issu'd forth like a vernal morn.

At Deborah's tomb the palms wav'd their rustling tops, above which suddenly rose the prophetess, pouring forth praise to the Author of life. There Miriam came forth from the dust of the earth triumphant, then lift up her eyes, beaming joy, towards Heaven: and then eagerly cast them over the spacious field; but found not the immortal who had rais'd her terrestrial frame from death to life. Thou angel of the resurrection, cry'd she, where shall I find thee? What sacred shades cover thy radiant head? In what mountain does that trumpet sound, with which thou hast awak'd me from the sleep of death? Ah where restest thou after thy glorious work, lost in astonishment that God should employ thee in performing such wonders?

Ezekiel now stood near his dust, and remember'd the

vision which, fill'd with inspiration, at his voice the dry bones that cover'd the field mov'd, bone join'd to bone, and over them grew sinews, flesh and the covering skin; and again speaking, they arose a numerous host. Thus Ezekiel stood, with a vernal lustre shining round him. His angel then cry'd, I hear a distant sound, as of the divine presence! Instantly the prophet's dust is in motion; he sinks down; but soon reanimated with the breath of eternal life, he rises erect, fill'd with unutterable joy; raises his grateful eyes to Heaven, and rushes into the embraces of the angel. Then guided by the sound of the divine presence, they move to the other dead, to be spectators of their resurrection.

Asnath seem'd as if sinking into a gentle slumber, and with dubious motion, hovering, touch'd the dust of her grave. So in the humid mead floats a vapour, which, enlighten'd by the moon, moves in silver lustre. O my guardian angel, said she, with what am I environ'd? what appearances glide before me? What new, what nameless sensations do I feel? Tell me, thou angel of God, shall I again die? Methinks my voice trembles, I faint, am weak, I sink like the soft dying sounds of the lute. I expire, O seraph, amidst the gentle murmurs of Eden's rills, amidst the sweet breezes in the shades of Paradise. Thus Asnath sunk down, but encompass'd with pleasing thoughts and thrilling sensations of joy, soon arose the heiress of immortality.

As expands the first flowers of the spring, so awak'd to life Jeptha's daughter, but never more to fade. Her tremulous lips in silver sounds sent up her praises, accompany'd by her angel's golden harp, which on the wings of grateful harmony rais'd her adorations to Heaven.

Thirza, the mother of the seven sons, had been interr'd with those glorious martyrs near Jerusalem. In their sepulchre the weary traveller had often sought repose, and oft pour'd forth tears. Within this spacious receptacle of the dead kneel'd the soul of the happy mother, with those of her sons, offering grateful thanksgivings. While their orisons ascended to Heaven, there

came across a stream which ran near the sepulchre, Semida and Jethro, a man of Bethlehem, who, guided by angels, had seen thee, O thou adorable Redeemer! in the stable where thy first infant cries were heard, and now, spent with fatigue and sorrow, he and Semida sat down at the entrance of the sepulchre, and thus gave vent to their thoughts:

O Semida, how shall I describe what I felt at the death of the Friend of Man!—But tell me, oh tell me, what sensation is this which, since our approaching the sepulchre of the martyrs, has seiz'd my mind? so it was at the approach of the angels who proclaim'd His nativity.

Holy, O Jethro, is this tomb! What thou feelest, I also feel. Let us retire; some angel or departed spirit, now sanctifies by his presence this sacred sepulchre, and the sensations we feel are intimations that we should depart.

They now arose, when Semida advancing into the gloomy cavern, cry'd, O ye immortals, lament with us the death of our Lord! Holy he liv'd! holy he dy'd! Jesus his name on earth—Jesus his name proclaim'd by angels, cannot be to you unknown! Though alarm'd at your presence, we are also the children of God, and our souls, like you, immortal! Permit us then to call you by an endearing human name—to call you brethren. Be this sepulchre of the martyrs a witness, when hereafter we come to you, that even on this unhallow'd earth, and while in the veil of flesh, we term'd you our brethren! Let us remind you, ye angels, on our ascending to your bright mansions, to receive us as your brethren! Semida then turn'd, and leaving the tomb, follow'd Jethro.

Thirza and her sons observ'd them, and while Semida spoke, view'd them unseen, with surprise and pleasure. Then turning to her sons, she said, I could have wish'd their longer stay: for candour and innocence are seated on their amiable aspects. Depart ye in peace. The Lord be your God, and bring you to our everlasting life. —Yes, at your falling asleep, joyfully shall we descend from Heaven to meet you, our brethren.

The idea of the two mortals was still present to Thirza's mind, when it was suddenly impress'd with a more astonishing view. Her sons, though bless'd with celestial life, sunk as into a sweet slumber; but two of them appear'd rather intranc'd than asleep, for their countenances became more resplendent. Their minds overflow'd with joy, and their voices were sweet as the celestial harps.—Do'st thou rise already, O most beautiful of mornings, thou blest morning of his resurrection? cry'd Benoni. Yes, joyful morning, thou art risen! The sepulchre shakes—Calvary and the cross shakes! Hail morning, pregnant with bliss! He then sunk like his brothers into a rapturous slumber. Instantly Jedidoth, the youngest of his brothers, pour'd forth his joy. O ye angels, cry'd he, has the Lord already ascended to the Father's throne? Here he sunk down, and lay like his brothers.

Thirza's astonishment continu'd: before her lay seven immortals, like mortals wrapp'd in sleep; while she, with a look of maternal fondness, hung over them. But soon her eyes clos'd; she no longer saw them; she sunk; but soon she awak'd, when perceiving her risen body; Praise, praise be to thee! said she with tremulous voice; eternal praises be to thee! Thou hast given me joys surpassing all conception! They, O thou Giver of ineffable joys, also awake. She then kneel'd, and with folded hands, and cordial angelic tears, saw her sons awake around her: saw them rise from their moving dust, swift as ascending flames. The bless'd mother beheld their bright transfiguration; their first smiles; their joy-beaming eyes rais'd towards Heaven, and heard their new voices burst forth in praise and thanksgiving.

Within another cave, hewn out of the rock, lay four friends. Their bright spirits were there, and these seeing their moulder'd dust, long'd for the resurrection. Darda, who last surviv'd, and had attended the bodies of his belov'd associates, Ethan, Chalcol and Heman, to their rest, thus address'd them: How happy, my friends, are we! united in life, united in the tomb, and we shall be united during the endless ages of eternity! We saw

Ethan expire, and lamented his death. White are now thy bones, O Ethan! I saw also Heman and Chalcol enter the vale of death. Chalcol fell asleep in mine arms, and I remain'd less ripe for immortality. O Chalcol! what was mine anguish, when I, forlorn, attended thee to the grave! but God, by his gracious consolations, enabled me to look up to Heaven! After a few nights the sleep of death fell on me! Behold, there lie our bones, waiting till they are call'd forth by the resurrection.—To rise from the dead, how transporting the thought! how ravishing will be the reality! O ecstasy, cry'd Heman, with a voice of celestial harmony, we shall awake to life! awake to days without end! Permit me, O thou Saviour of men! to utter a wish, which my ardent soul almost ripens into hope—that my body may awake with thine! with thine, O Jesus! for corruption has no part with thee. O grant that this sleeping dust may arise under thy shade, to glory and immortality! Ah! the bless'd time is arriv'd! exclaim'd Chalcol. See the dead awake! Behold their increasing lustre!—He was then silent. He awak'd with those that reviv'd. No time was left to thee, O Darda, for astonishment! nor for thee, O Ethan! the dead bones mov'd; they arose vested in redoubled splendor, and these happy friends soar'd hand in hand, with intermingled radiance, praising the Redeemer.

Near Jerusalem slept Anna the propheteſs, who had seen the babe of Bethlehem in the temple, and knew him to be the promis'd shoot of Judah's stem. He was carry'd into Egypt, and she to her grave, whence she now awoke to glory; issu'd forth from her tomb, and opening her immortal eyes, saw Jesus hanging lifeless on the cross. Though thou art dead, said she, by thee am I awak'd from death! Thou hast given me a new and immortal body before the great day of consummation! Thy sacred blood has flow'd, and loudly it calls for grace! Here joy stopp'd her voice.

Joel, Samma's first, and now only son, had left his father and the hill of death, wandering with slow steps

into the valley of mount Olivet, towards his brother's tomb. The stone was already cover'd with moss, and near it he sunk down, his eyes stiff and red with weeping for Jesus and Benoni.—The mouths of babes and sucklings, said he, shall speak thy praise. My grief for Benoni began to abate, when now—But I should not mention the divine name with that of death. I will no longer stifle my grief for poor Benoni, who is still dead to me. How can I presume to lament the great Prophet! he is the brother of angels, and surely none but angels should dare to weep for him: but for thee I dare —for thee I will ever grieve.

He then lean'd his drooping head on a stone, his eyes languid, and his visage wan. His brother's guardian angel, and his brother himself, view'd him with intermingled joy and compassion: for the soul of Benoni, and his angel, had descended to the sacred silence of the tomb; but this was unknown to Joel. So the pious man, resign'd amidst his sufferings, knows not the hand which supports him, though it is as near as the sweet whispering breeze. O seraph, said Benoni, I love him more than he loves himself; but why does he lament my death, and not think of my more exalted life?

Thou art gone, my Benoni, resum'd Joel, and hast left me alone, like a flower in Sharon's vale, whose stalk is broken in its early bloom.

If I am gone, my Joel, my dearest brother, it is to grow high in Heaven, and spread a friendly shade near the tree of life.

Our father is old. Thy death, O Benoni, will take him from me, and sorrow bring his grey hairs to the grave! I, fatherless, and without a brother, shall pant for the cup of death, which, though to others bitter, to me will be sweet.

O seraph, how am I pierc'd by his anguish! Dry up his tears!—Ah, dry up his affecting tears!—Ah, the tomb shakes, and from the moving stones around me rises a faint light in gentle fluctuations? O my God, where am I? O thou Giver of eternal life, support me! Sure thou

wilt not dissolve this spiritual substance! Thus he spake in a voice soft as the dying echo. Now glorify'd with the resurrection body, he cry'd, Thou not only supportest me, O thou most gracious, but clothest me with everlasting bliss! All praise, blessing, and honour be ascrib'd to thee, my Creator, who hast loaded me with thy benefits, and given me this immortal life! Rejoice, O my brother, and exult; for when thy body shall be dissolv'd, it shall be rais'd by thy Redeemer, who shall thus load thee with his benefits! Here the blest Benoni, seeing his father, added, O tender parent, lament not over my tomb, I am in a state of bliss, and it no longer contains my body!

Samma now approaching the tomb, cry'd, O Joel! long have I sought thee. Let us hasten from these gloomy sepulchres. Is not that my dear Benoni's? Come, Joel, let us flee from hence. God bless thee, my child! God will speedily bless thee, return'd Benoni: he will bless thee, thou tender father, with eternal life.

Simeon, after pouring forth the joy of his heart, on his seeing the Saviour, whom God had appointed the Light of nations, the glory of his people Israel, laid his hoary head in the grave. His spirit then arose with resplendent lustre, and his corruptible part moulder'd into dust. The radiant soul of the prophet now hover'd over his grave, unknowing that his dust was soon to rise in celestial beauty, to enjoy eternal life. In the path which extends by the brook of Cedron from Jerusalem, to the foot of mount Olivet, slowly mov'd towards Simeon's sepulchre, one laden with years, and with him a boy. These were Simeon's brother and grandson. The eyes of the old man were involv'd in darkness, the too early night of death, ere we enter that gloomy vale. Boaz, the youth, guided his uncertain steps, and offering child-like comfort, they thus discours'd:

Dear father, wipe thine eyes, and weep no more.

Long it is since mine eyes have seen; they are only fit to weep. I must lament the slow approach of death, and from this darksome earth look up to fairer, brighter

prospects. But tell me, Boaz, are we far from my holy brother's bones?

No, not far. The moss on the tomb, like ivy among those lonely ruins, says he has been long at rest.

Ah, child, he return'd, my heart is fill'd with secret pleasure at recollecting those ancient, those venerable sepulchres. Has Simeon already lain so long in the tomb? Long has mine been hewn in the rock, yet still wants its inhabitant.

Thus spake Simeon's brother, leaning on Boaz, and at length resum'd, Tell me, child, for to thee the sun is not extinguish'd, nor the mild light of the summer's eve; tell me, are the heavens serene? I feel a gentle breeze refreshing my weary limbs.

The air, said Boaz, is clear, and the wide fields look like spring.

Ah, Boaz, were it involv'd in blackest clouds, and deform'd by tempests, yet shall the day on which I die be to me serene.—He thirsts for death, said Simeon's soul to the angel, and is unable to bear the thought that Jesus is dead. Thou dost not know then, said the angel, that the dreadful news has been conceal'd from him, lest it should shorten his days.

In the meanwhile, Simeon's brother and Boaz sat down in the tomb. The angel now separated from the common dust, that of Simeon's bones. It mov'd, visible only to the angels, and arose about his soul, forming a resplendent body. His mental powers were borne on the wings of ecstatic melody; but return'd at the completion of his new created frame, and the idea of his resurrection fill'd him with sublimest transports.

At this instant one who had come to the passover with quick step, walk'd by in his way back to Bethlehem, and Simeon's brother asking the meaning of his haste; Should I not haste, he answer'd, to carry the news of his death to my family? Whose death? call'd the brother of the risen. Art thou, he return'd, the only one who has not heard of the crucifixion of the divine Jesus? The old man sunk down speechless; but being at length brought

to himself, was with difficulty led back by the traveller and Boaz, to the gate of Jerusalem.—Shall we, O seraph! said Simeon, shall we meet his spirit, when it quits its present encumbering abode? for the ensuing morn will surely set it free. No, my belov'd Simeon, the angel return'd, he is not dying; even in this abject life much joy awaits him; for thou art to appear to his enraptur'd mind, and to converse with him on the Lord's resurrection.

Here lie and rest, said John, who stood by his corrupted frame, till the great decisive day. My continuance here will be only while the Redeemer's body is wrapt in the shades of death. Then wilt thou, O Lamb of God! arise as Victor! and gather us around thee, that we may behold thy glory. At length, at the trumpet's joyful sound, the body with which I now willingly remain shall rise. O the transports of the resurrection! How transcendent must they be, when only the hopes of them are so ravishing! How delightful the wish, that my body may soon revive! Such were his thoughts when he beheld the bless'd Benoni advancing radiant thro' the evening twilight. O seraph, said he to his celestial guardian, what angel is that which issues from those pendant rocks? Every charm of vernal beauty environs the heavenly youth. He resembles Benoni. Is it not his guardian angel? No; it is no angel, it is no soul cloth'd in a vesture of light; yet it resembles Benoni. Is he risen? O, heavenly youth, art thou risen from the dead? Come, whoever thou art, wing thy way, and animate thine harp. Perhaps Benoni, lately deceas'd, is risen, and sent hither to declare some new wonder of the divine goodness.

Here Benoni, striking his melodious harp, came with graceful flight to John, and said, Greatest of those born of women, the Father of all eternally bless thee! I bring thee heavenly tidings. Behold the sacred dust awakes! Thou baptizer of the great Emanuel, the whole plain is in motion, and the dead in the Lord awake!

Who, O celestial youth, said John, oh, who hast thou

seen? I have seen, return'd Benoni, the father of men! Enoch and Elijah stood astonish'd! Abraham shone like the host of Heaven! and Isaac came in a crimson cloud! I saw Moses and Job, with grateful eyes lift up in devout adoration! I saw the seven martyrs absorb'd in ecstasy! May God eternally bless thee—thee, one of the race of Adam! thou art now to prepare for thy resurrection.

John, with amazement, beheld his body rise: his sublime soul animated the lucid form, and he stood erect, transfigur'd. Now was the beatific miracle complete, and to the Redeemer the glorify'd saint pour'd forth his rapturous praise.

These names of the risen distinctly reach'd mine ear: others the waving palms dispers'd, till Sion's heavenly muse, visiting my contemplative hours, convey'd them to my thoughts.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XII.

The Argument.

Joseph obtains Pilate's permission to bury the body of Jesus. He and Nicodemus, having wrapt it in spices, perform the interment, which is solemniz'd by choirs of risen saints and angels. The disciples, many of the seventy, and Mary, with some devout women, meet in John's house, and are join'd by Joseph and Nicodemus; the latter bringing the crown of thorns, which he had taken from the body at its interment. The death of Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who, with Nathaniel and Martha, sees her die. Lazarus returns to the company of believers at Jerusalem, and endeavours to comfort them. Salem, John's angel, strengthens him with a vision.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XII.

DISTRESS'D and deeply plung'd in bitterest anguish, is the soul that fears her not being admitted to her divine inheritance: bewilder'd in thought, she is struck with the curses of Sinai and of Ebal, and with the terrors of ensangnin'd Golgotha. She no longer hopes to wear the white robe and the victor's crown; but afflicted, lies in the dust, till a ray of comfort, intermingled with the blest idea that the divine Redeemer will be the Deliverer, breaks in upon her mind, and fills her with hope and joy, and humble submission: thus dejected, thus of every hope bereft, were they who knew the Saviour, when they saw his eyes clos'd, his body dead, and all around silence and solitude. Joseph of Arimathea alone bore up against this depression. To inter thee, O sacred corpse, said he, shall be his task who, fill'd with pusillanimity, did not dare to oppose thy murderers. I will, added he, calling aloud, so that the Roman officer, and those involv'd in silent grief, heard his voice—I will inter the divine Jesus in my own sepulchre. Here, Nicodemus, stay for me at the cross, while I haste to the Roman governor. I will bring the funeral linen.

He hasted away: so hastes he who firmly resolv'd to lead a new life, despises the threats of man, the allurements of vice, and all its vain seducing charms. He soon reach'd the palace, where he beheld Pilate, discompos'd, and Portia, whose sorrowful look and humid eyes express'd the anguish of her heart. Joseph having asked

for the body, Pilate bid him send for the commanding officer at the cross, and on his arrival, being assured that Jesus was really dead, order'd him to deliver the body to Joseph, who, returning him thanks, withdrew, and, having fetch'd the linen and spices, hasted back to the hill of death.

The disconsolate mother of Jesus first saw the faithful disciple bringing the funeral linen for her son's interment; but, fill'd with inward grief, stood silent, while John, in vain, strove to give her consolation. As Joseph was hasting to the cross, he was met by Nicodemus, and to those of the faithful who drew near, they cheerfully said, We are not afraid to inter the Holy Jesus. The pious mourners then retreated, and stood at a distance; not so the celestial witnesses, the risen and the angels. These remov'd nearer, and now the harp, to the human ear unheard, began to sound: but had a mortal, however immers'd in sorrow, heard its rapture-breathing notes, ecstasy would have rais'd him to the joys of heaven, or the lugubrious sounds have extinguish'd life.

Joseph and Nicodemus, having spread out the linen and aromatics, drew the nails; took the corpse from the cross, and gently lower'd it to the ground. They then wrapp'd the body in the spices and linen, to preserve that from putrefaction, which was soon to rise from the dead.

Eve, now hovering over the body, bow'd down her face to that of the breathless Messiah. Her golden tresses wav'd over his wounds, and a celestial tear dropp'd on his tranquil breast. How lovely, O my Son and my Lord, said she, appear these wounds, the testimonials of thy love! from each vein flows salvation! Though the colour of death has ting'd thy face, yet thy clos'd lips and fix'd eyes speak eternal life! thou still smilest benign, and every lineament of thy divine countenance indicates love to man.

Thus spake the mother of the human race, while Joseph and Nicodemus were swathing the extended body. The burial clothes being stain'd with blood by the trem-

bling hands of the disciples who perform'd this tender office, the forefathers of the Mediator began a plaintive song, a celestial threnody. One of the choirs began, and the tears of the bless'd flow'd.

Who is coming from Calvary, cloth'd in red? Who, with blood-stain'd garments, comes from the altar? Whose divine power is conceal'd, and whose salvation is everlasting?

To them answer'd another choir, while their tears also flow'd, and to their voices was join'd the sound of the trumpet: I am he who teacheth righteousness; a master who bringeth salvation and counsel.

The first choir resum'd, Why is thy raiment stain'd with red, and thy vesture like that of one who treads the grapes?

Did not I tread the grapes alone? and were any with me? Those who arose have I crush'd in my anger. In my indignation I trod them under foot, and my garments have been sprinkled with their blood. The day of wrath, the year of the great redemption is come! When I undertook to redeem mankind, I look'd around, but no helper was near, none in Heaven or on Earth! Mine anger prevail'd against the proud, I bruis'd the head of the serpent! Mine adversaries have I crush'd in my wrath, and have trampled their power in the dust.

Thus sang the choirs, joining with sadness triumphant songs. Joseph, taking off the crown of insult, cover'd the Redeemer's sacred head. The celestial spectators that hover'd over Golgotha, were not silent, like Mary and the disciples; but renew'd their funeral hymns, which were accompany'd with celestial tears. Hadst thou, O favourite disciple of the deceas'd son of the most afflicted of mothers, now heard those harps, which, though still a mortal, thou heard'st in Patmos, how rais'd would have been thine ecstasy! The choir of the risen, with their eyes fix'd on the corpse, continu'd:

Listen, ye angels, the brook of Cedron murmurs! Listen to the murmuring of the brook of Cedron! Tread upon the proud—tread, O my soul, on the vanquish'd

serpent! The palms groan'd on Gethsemane; for there he began to die.

From another choir issu'd sounds, hoarse as thunder: Heard he not below the roarings of the infernal floods, the bellowings of the tortur'd? Did not Tabor's summit shake amidst the clouds? Then Eloa, issuing from the darkness that encompasses the Father's judgment seat, sang triumphant! He then began to die!

They were silent, and then was heard in a soft voice of complaint, He is dead! ye angels, he is dead!

Joseph and Nicodemus now rais'd the sacred body from the ground, and, with slow steps, carry'd it down the hill. When one of the choirs sang, Ah, he thought it no robbery to be like God! yet Jesus, fairest among men and angels, condescended to die the death of the cross! The servants of sin, for his vesture, cast lots! When parch'd with thirst, gall and vinegar they gave him to drink, and his afflicted soul drank of the bitter cup of insult!

Here a fervent choir lifted up their voices to Heaven: Ah, Jerusalem!—Woe to thee, Jerusalem! Woe to thy sons, O Jerusalem! Thy dreadful voice, thy cry for the Redeemer's blood, has reach'd the highest Heavens!

The harps of the fathers now fail'd; even in the hand of Moses, fail'd the melodious strings; on Eloa's high-sounding trumpet proclaiming woe, he withdrew from the weeping choirs, and, advancing near the bloody corpse, sang, accompany'd by the seraph's trump, Long will the Eternal chastise you who have murder'd this Abel. Thou, Cain, I well know. Thy brother's blood cry'd for mercy, not for revenge, and its ardent voice penetrated to the darkness which encompasses the Holy of Holies! but ye spurn'd at mercy!—therefore, from lofty Golgotha to the lowest Hell, shall the Avenger's voice resound through successive ages! Eloa's trumpet now ceas'd, and silence broke off the glowing prophet's song.

Their looks follow'd the body, while the faithful disciples carry'd it down to the sepulchre, which was hewn

in a lonely rock, bordering on the mount, and overhung with aged trees. The disciples having roll'd away the ponderous stone which clos'd the entrance, Joseph, with his eyes fill'd with tears, chose the spot where the sacred corpse should lie, saying, He whose life and death were fill'd with distress and pain, has at length a place to lay his head! They then gently laid the body down, and having hung over it with streaming eyes, at length mov'd back the massy stone, and left the corpse of the Mediator in sepulchral darkness.

Now the celestial choirs, perceiving through the sepulchral gloom the resurrection's lucid dawn, renew'd their hymns—Thou, Lord, shalt not see corruption. No sooner art thou involv'd in the shades of death, than new life breaks forth around; for the trumpet of the chief of angels will soon proclaim the revival of the greatest among the dead! Ye harps, in soft sounds, shall hail the most resplendent morn, when the Conqueror of Death shall rise! Lament him—lament ye, his belov'd, who yet mortal walk in the dust! Soon will ye shed other tears; tears unknown to us, who never felt your woes!

Around the sepulchre all were now silent, for the angels and men were withdrawn. John then turning towards the dejected Mary, said, with sympathetic tenderness, O mother, thy precious son being conceal'd from our view, let us retire from this hill, and let me lead thee to my dwelling. Her soul was now elevated above itself, and she answer'd, with her eyes red with weeping, My being thy mother, O Jesus, may be one day the source of heavenly raptures, and I rejoice that thou, his belov'd disciple, art given to me as my son; but grief, and death, and the grave, dwell in the thought, that he, my son, is no more!—Here, again sinking into a solemn silence, she veil'd her face, and was slowly led by her son, with sympathizing sadness, down the solitary hill.

Amidst thickset palms, and within the temple's shade, adjoining to the city wall, stood the house of the belov'd disciple. Hither was he leading the disconsolate Mary,

himself weaken'd and oppress'd by grief, when meeting with some of the twelve, of the seventy, and several of the devout women, he entreated them to go with him, and join their endeavours to heal her wounded mind.

Sing, O muse, the tears of the lovers for the belov'd, and the complaints of mourning friendship!

In this house they soon assembled. Mary, with weeping eyes, enter'd the hall where she had often seen the Holy Jesus, and heard him speak with tears of joy: but now, on seeing the seat empty where he used to open divine truths, and pronounce his affectionate benedictions, she burst into an agony of grief, and sunk down, leaning her head on the seat. While she was in this attitude of grief, Mary Magdalen, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, and Nathaniel, went up to her, and, at their entreaties, she permitted the women to raise her up; but sat veil'd; and all the company conform'd to her silence, till Peter entering, wept aloud, exclaiming, He is bury'd! —I hope, earnestly hope, that we shall all be soon bury'd near him! Joseph shall promise to lay my body close to the rock which holds my dear Lord!—And me within the rock! said Mary.

Arm in arm came Simon the Canaanite and Matthew, with Philip and James, the son of Alpheus. Lebbeus came by himself: concern suppress his speech, and covering his face, he sat in the darkest place of the hall. Next came James, from his ardent zeal styl'd the Son of Thunder, who, with uplift hands and eyes rais'd towards Heaven, cry'd, He is dead! he is dead! O what is all human excellence, even the most exalted and sublime! for over him have the wicked triumph'd! So saying, he withdrew, and walk'd among the shady palms.

Hither came Bartholomew, and with him Andrew the brother of Peter, with Cleophas, Matthias, and Semida, all sad and disconsolate, the affliction of each encreas'd by that of his associates. Silence now reign'd in the hall, and nothing was heard but the dull murmurs of grief. Mary Magdalen lighted the funeral lamp; after which devout women brought linen and spices for the sacred

corpse. Even the guardian angels of the apostles, and other mourners, enter'd the hall, and the all-seeing eye of him whose death they bewail'd, cast a compassionate look on the assembly. Mary Magdalen's angel then raising her from her depth of affliction, enabled her thus to give vent to her grief.

Alas! how are all things chang'd since he—O mother! do not thou also die, for then what will become of us! —Now I first feel—now I join in his lamentation over Jerusalem, the solitary widow, the queen among the nations! We liv'd in obscurity, yet were happy; for he whose death we mourn was divine: but now, in what misery are we involv'd! What nights of sorrow await us! Oh may our nights of sorrow be few, and our last sleep soon come! Our enemies triumph, and insult those that love their Lord.—To him they offer'd the basest insults—to him, when athirst, they gave gall and vinegar, doubly imbitter'd with contumely—contumely cast upon him in the midst of his tortures! O thou Judge! thou just Avenger! pour out to them the full cup of thy wrath!

She ceas'd, and the mother of Jesus, in faint voice and broken accents, said, Learn, O Magdalen, like my Son, to forgive! Did he not, when bleeding on the cross, fill'd with divine philanthropy, cry out, Father, forgive them, they know not what they do?

Devout astonishment and inexpressible sorrow here seiz'd every heart, and all felt a conflict between the most elevated joy and bitterest grief; but grief prevail'd, and their souls were again involv'd in gloom. Yes, have mercy on them, O thou Judge and Father! said Lebbeus, have mercy on us, and suffer us to die! What have we to do on earth? He is dead! In his Father's house, he told us, are many mansions! Ah, let us rather lie at the threshold of thine house, than remain in the dwellings of misery! No other comfort can I receive but death! for this I long: its name I love to utter: it is more pleasing than the spring: it is to me as the hymns of the temple! Be it our most delightful employment to converse on the change those

have felt who have enter'd into the state of bliss, and, like active travellers, let us stand ready with our staff in our hand! I love you, my beloved, as myself, I therefore wish you the bliss of dying!—Yes, said Peter, death is most desirable, and O thou Most Merciful! permit us to make the sepulchres for each other.

Scarce had he utter'd these words, when Thomas, with dejected look, stopp'd at the entrance of the room. How awful appear'd the objects that struck his convuls'd mind! to him the glimmering hall was as a tomb, and the silent mourners as the images of the dead! If ye be they, said he, entering the room, who heard the loud hosannas, when the blessed Jesus enter'd into life, how can ye avoid accompanying him in death? I feel mine approach, and thought I should have found among you some who had arriv'd at happiness, to whom we might have paid the funeral rites. He is buried who, when living, walk'd on the waves of the sea, and restor'd the dead to life!

Now, with mournful look, Joseph of Arimathea, entering, join'd the sighing assembly, saying, Your brother in Christ and mine, my friend Nicodemus, is come with me, and, trembling, waits your permission to enter. He brings—Ah, Joseph, thou best of men, said the mother of the Lord, what does he bring? What, O Joseph! does he bring?—Oh, I see ye suffer too much, return'd he; alas! what will ye suffer! Let him return—let him fly from hence, and not add to your affliction! What does he bring? What, O Joseph! has he brought?—I will go, and prevail on him to fly from thence! He brings—the bloody crown—The bloody crown! the Saviour's mother exclaim'd, with a cry that pierc'd the hearts of the whole assembly. Instantly Nicodemus enter'd with the crown of thorns in his hand; when, breaking from those who had supported her, she took off her veil, threw it over the murderous wreath, and, wringing her hands, sunk with it on the floor. They rais'd her up, and she stretch'd out her suppliant arms for divine support.—Her Son, overflowing with tenderness, look'd down from

above, and prepar'd for her sublime felicity: but this being yet conceal'd, she, pale and languid, continu'd her lamentations, crying, Why, O why was it brought? Too long did I see it encompass his bleeding head!—He that dwelleth in the Heaven of Heavens, tho' all-wise and all-gracious, hath bent his bow against me, and pierc'd me with his fiery arrows! Ah, never—never did mother bear a son like him I saw expire on the cross!

Meanwhile the devout Mary, the sister of Lazarus, lay at the point of death.—Cold sweats, and the conflict of her heart, denounc'd her approaching dissolution. She already tasted the leaden slumber, the harbinger of sleep in the bosom of silent corruption: from this lethargic insensibility she rais'd her head, and, with mournful countenance, sought Martha's sympathizing eyes, which, exhausted by continual grief, shed no tears. She then began the following discourse, in which Martha answer'd and she reply'd: I can no longer, my dear sister, continue silent. All now forsake me, even Lazarus and Nathaniel! and see, I die! Ah, I liv'd with them, but without them shall die!

Accuse not the faithful. Perhaps the divine Teacher has led them into the wilderness, that they may learn by experience, how he feeds the hungry, and refreshes the weary soul.

I do not accuse them, Martha. Those whom I love never have I accus'd. If I have, O my dearest friends, forgive me—Forgive all my offences. Alas! what now rises in my soul, covers it with sadness.—Shake off the solicitude with which thou art oppress'd. Does that gloom which sometimes clouded the felicity of thy life, return in death?—O call not the divine disposition gloom! I conjure thee, by him who judgeth us, and is now gathering me to my fathers, call not his disposition gloom. If I have suffer'd, have I not also had much joy, and friends like thee? have not I, in my pilgrimage to the grave, seen Jesus, the delight of angels? seen his miracles, and heard his wisdom? O let me be thankful for all my afflictions! for all the supports, all the reviving

cordials I have receiv'd! And above all, I give thee thanks, O thou all-gracious Disposer of my life, that I have seen Jesus, the Friend of man, the Awakener of the dead! Leave me, Martha: go and make ready my sepulchre, where Lazarus slept, there will I sleep.

Sleep, O Mary, where Lazarus slept, and rise at the voice of him who raises the dead!—Happy Martha, what sweet hopes flow into my soul! Withdraw, that I may be alone with God.—How shall I leave thee in thy last moments! I cannot leave thee. Compose thyself, dear sister, thou art alone with God; and may the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob be with thee!—Stay then. May he be with me who fills the Heavens, and whose almighty voice calls the children of men to return to life! With me be the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

Having thus spoke, she, from her inmost soul, thus supplicated the Forgiver of sins: Hear, oh hear me, and enter not into judgment with a poor sinner! What mortal can stand before thee? O God, give rest to my dying heart, and rejoice my soul, with the assurance of thy salvation! Thou Lord of death, cast me not off from thy presence! Give me again, O Father, thy consolations, and restore to me the joys of thy spirit! Thou who heard'st Job amidst the most piercing afflictions, regard my supplications, and be my support.

Thus she pray'd. Then turning to Martha, said, Dost thou, my dear sister, think that Jesus now prays for me? He shed tears on his coming to the grave of Lazarus; will he not also pity me? Oh, what hope dawns into my soul! The Omnipresent Lord of Life and Death is with me!

Mary now sunk into a deep slumber, on which Martha rose and stood by the bed, to view her sleeping sister, scarce breathing, for fear she should awake her who had now enter'd far into the gloomy vale, while she was left alone. Sadness perverted her heart, and some tears flow'd down her pallid cheek, till her agonies and palpitations gradually subsided. Thus silent she stood, in the gloomy chamber, enlighten'd only by a dim half-extin-

guish'd lamp. A traveller, who considers death as a subject of joy, after passing through a parch'd and lonely wilderness, enters the cavity of a hollow rock, where little of the lowering day finds entrance, and where is presented to his astonish'd sight a tomb, on which is placed recumbent a statue of the dead, with another of marble, the friend of the deceas'd, who stands weeping. The traveller views the tomb, is struck at the image of the deceas'd, and sympathizes in the grief of the mournful survivor. So, Mary, did thine angel, on approaching thy bed, find Martha with thee, and at thy feet stood the celestial youth.

Of those angels who in the scale of spirits are near to the human soul, beauty is the portion, and those distinguish'd by the title of thrones are supereminent in glory; yet how dim their splendor, when compar'd with that of Him who ascended to the right hand of the Father! O thou who hast triumphantly risen to the Heaven of Heavens, my Intercessor! my Brother! grant that innumerable hosts of the redeem'd may die the death of the righteous. Whether our lives be clos'd amidst sufferings, or whether we enjoy a foretaste of Heaven, O thou Redeemer! thou Lamb of God! let the death of the righteous be our portion!

While Chebar stood at the feet of Mary, he found his resplendent beauty fade: from his face fled the rosy blush of the morning, and the radiant lustre of his eyes: his wings flagg'd; no harmony, no fragrant exhalations, accompany'd their languid motion; no longer they glow'd with celestial azure, bedropp'd with gold. From his head he took his radiant crown, and held it in his drooping hand. He knew that, though her heart-strings were ready to break, he could not assist her, before Lebbeus, Martha and Nathaniel join'd their lamentations, and Lazarus pour'd forth his prayers.

Lazarus was still at Jerusalem, in the dejected company of the faithful, and, going to the mother of Jesus, said, Behold, O Mary! midnight is now at hand, and when I left Bethany, my sister seem'd near her dissolu-

tion. I will go to see her. Perhaps, if the dreadful news of what has pass'd at Calvary has not reach'd her ears, she may be still alive. Lebbeus, instantly rising, said, I will accompany thee; at which Nathaniel, embracing him, answer'd, Come, thou most belov'd among the living, how my heart thanks thee! They were now standing ready to go, when Lazarus, addressing the mother of Jesus, said, O thou mother of him whose name the angels proclaim'd! may he who sees and counts thy tears, even the Father of him who is interr'd, be with thee! Thou heardst thy blessed son pray, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit! I commend thy soul and mine to his and our Almighty Father.

Thus saying, they hasted towards Bethany, and amidst the silence of the night, reach'd the house where the devout Mary lay, and stood by her sister near the bed. At length Mary awaking from her lethargic slumber, cry'd, Thanks be to thee, O thou Almighty Author of life and death, they are come, and with them Lebbeus. O Mary, said Lazarus, how has the Giver of every mercy supported thee? Whatever he does, said she, how painful soever it may appear, is the effect of mercy. Ah! what has my heart endur'd! Now, behold I die. But where, oh where is Jesus? He knows—he knows what I suffer. Has he pray'd for me?—What, O Mary! said Lazarus, dost thou now suffer?

Mary answer'd, My sufferings spring not from the dread of corruption, or from afflictive thoughts of being taken from these my dear friends, but from doubts which wound my bleeding soul. Ah, brother, how was it with thee?—But does Jesus pray for me? With the prayers of the Holy Jesus will I compose myself for the sleep of death. Will not this earthly life soon be over? O say, is it not near its end?—They are silent, Martha, Nathaniel is also silent. Jesus has not yet pray'd for me! this pierces my soul. Here am I; O Lord, thy will be done! Thy will is best!

Here Lazarus, lifting high his folded hands, said, As a mother pities her child, so, O Lord, is thy pity towards

us: but though a mother may forget to pity Her child, yet thy mercy never fails.

Lazarus then weeping, Mary rais'd her languid head, and said, Tell me, my heavenly brother, which now belongs to me, the curse from Sinai, or the mother's love? Oh, if he loves me, what triumph! What ecstasy! the most lofty and noble praises be offer'd to the Giver of eternal grace! to him whose mercy is not like that of man! to the God of all grace! But how can I know that he pities me with a mother's pity? Oh speak; has the prayer of the Most Righteous soften'd my Judge, and does he look on me with the pitying eye of parental love? —O Thou, who art most merciful, cry'd Nathaniel, look down with an eye of compassion, and no longer hide thy cheering smiles from the afflicted.—Here he ceas'd, and Lazarus added, Thine afflictions, O sister, will soon end in complete felicity. Thou know'st not what a pattern we have had of patience and resignation to God, and to whom we look up in the Heaven of Heavens! I have been rais'd to life, yet wish, O Mary, to fall asleep with thee. The voice of death would to me be more melodious than the hallelujahs of the crowded temple. O Mary, our divine Friend, our Help in time of trouble, the blessed Jesus, who remitted sins, who rais'd the dead —dy'd—on the cross.

He crucify'd!—He dead on the cross! cry'd she, with faltering accents. Ye angels! He crucify'd and dead! —O Thou who hast permitted this, I bless and praise thee for all my sufferings, and follow my deceas'd Lord! Here her tongue fail'd, and the colour of death overspread her placid countenance. Lazarus, laying his hand on her icy forehead, said, O thou who art perfected in thy Redeemer's love, may this sleep convey thee among those who die in the Lord! Be thou now born to the day of light! to eternal life! My heart cleaves to thine, yet gladly do I see the dissolution of this tabernacle, and thy departure to the heavenly Canaan. O thou Preserver of Israel! support her through the dreary valley, and bring her to the land of felicity, where

thou dryest up every tear, where no complaint, no lamentation, interrupts the grateful song of praise. To her be the sun of this earth extinguish'd. Thou death, shed on her thy last slumber; and may her mortal frame rest in peace! Receive her, O corruption, that her body may grow up to life; a seed sown by the Lord for the great day of the harvest, when the reapers shall shout, and the trumpets sound; when the earth and the sea shall, with a mighty noise, bring forth their dead; when the whole expanse of the heavens shall resound with the praises of the supreme Lord and Judge.

Chebar, seeing the triumph of death over Mary, was so transported with joy, that gentle murmurs, as at a remote distance, issu'd from his tremulous wings. They who were present knew not what it was they heard. Soon the seraph, touching his soul-animating harp, from its enlivening strings struck such sounds of celestial harmony, that Mary rais'd herself and listen'd in an ecstacy, while Lazarus and Nathaniel supported her feeble frame. The seraph now no longer trembled, but from the soft thrilling strings, in sounds of inexpressible melody, pour'd the peace of God, which passeth knowledge. The attentive soul of Mary was swell'd with sensations before unknown: thoughts, new and sublime, in a soul ready to leave its corruptible dust, and to enter into eternal life. Thus was it with thee, holy Ezekiel, in thy vision of the resurrection, when all around the convuls'd earth teem'd with the awakening dead. The angelic harp still continu'd its powerful sounds, diffusing into the almost disembody'd soul, a repose never tasted by any that return'd to life. Now the celestial herald burst into louder and still louder strains, and tempests and earthquakes seem'd to accompany the notes; while the immortal, in the transports of inspiration, sang to the resounding harp, Holy! holy! holy! is He who bled on Calvary!

Mary, sinking under the raptures which the celestial voice pour'd into her labouring heart, expir'd. Her brother sunk down by her, then grasping her clay-cold hand, and wiping away his tears, said, Praise be to Him

who has made death the way to life! Glory be to the Giver of immortality! Behold thou art now in the tents of peace; yet thy soul shall not forever remain alone; for even this corruptible shall put on incorruption: the fair flower broken by the rude storm, shall, on the solemn morn of the resurrection, rise in celestial lustre. Let us now commit the sacred dust to its kindred earth. No, we will for a moment forbear, and devoutly view this dear body, that has just been crush'd by the thunder of death, and will rise at the sound of the last trumpet. It will lie ripening through successive ages! How mysterious are the ways of the Eternal! Thought is lost in astonishment! When I would consider His ways, I cannot perceive the darkness that surrounds them: yet, if a glimpse of twilight breaks out, I weep with joy, while conducted by the dawn, the harbinger of the joyful morn. With her it is now morning! Oh receive, my dear sister! my last salutation, May he who now rests in his sepulchre bless thee!

The divine Jesus had already bless'd her. A celestial body of radiant lustre hover'd round Mary's soul, guided by the powerful hand of creation. Environ'd with streams of felicity, she first cast a thought on the corpse she had left, exulting in her being freed from her encumbering clay; and then in complete glorification, was fill'd with a lively sense of her beatitude. With extended arms she cry'd, O thou sleep of death! thou summit of blessings! Thou—Is it possible, ye angels, is it possible, ye heirs of Heaven, that I am bless'd like you? She was then silent; but, soon closing her hands, she resum'd, O thou first born of felicity! thou Son of Eternal Light! thou Holy One of God, is it possible that I am thus bless'd?—O sweet forgetfulness of all my sufferings, come and infuse sensations of thy delightful repose!—No, forbear; for, to compare the sufferings of the past life with everlasting joys, this plentitude of bliss, is ecstasy. Ye who never fell, however happy in your persevering obedience and purity unstain'd, know not the felicity of comparing the wretchedness of sin with

the joys of this eternal life. Ye never wept such tears as Jesus, the God of loving-kindness, now wipes from our eyes! Ye prophetic sensations, with which I have oft been seiz'd, I now, with grateful thanks, acknowledge; ye pointed out to me hope in the Heaven of Heaven! Oh, I will rejoice in my past misery! I will thank thee for all my sufferings! Now my hopes are fulfill'd! In the days of my mortal life, evening succeeded evening till the last, when came the night of death. How swiftly they pass'd away, and now I awake in the morning of life. The dream which began with weeping, ended with the tears of death! the dream of life is now over, and I am awak'd! Once more shall I awake, when my mouldering clay shall become incorruptible, and a more worthy habitation of its spiritual inhabitant, and be resplendent, even as the body of him by whom it shall be rais'd, who also dy'd, was bury'd, and will rise from the dead! Mary then ascended like the brightness of the morning, light as air, swift as thought, and as she pass'd, saw the wide creation opening to her view without end.

Lazarus, fill'd with the most elevated ideas of death, hasted back, in order to return to the mourning disciples. On his approaching the house, one of the seventy, ardently embracing him, related with ecstasy, the wonders of the Lord, which he himself had seen.

On Lazarus's entering the gloomy hall, he found it still fill'd with sighs, on which, bursting into tears, and raising his eyes and hands to Heaven, he cry'd, O God of gods, reward him still farther, who, in obedience to thy will, humbled himself, and submitted to the death of the cross! Where is the crown of the Conqueror of death conceal'd? Let me see it, bloody as it is; it is more dear to me than the angels' shining crowns which I have seen from afar.

O thou mother of the divine Jesus! hear, and raise thyself from this abyss of grief: at his death the earth trembled! Night cover'd the earth, and thou hast seen its terrors! But thou know'st not how the heavens bore testimony to him. Behold, in the court of the temple,

the evening sacrifice awfully blaz'd in the midst of the gloom: the sacrificers who stood at the altar, trembled at the terrors of the too early night: the priests kneel'd facing the door of the sanctuary, and looking towards the Holy of Holies, thank'd the Avenger, that Jesus had been put to death; when, presuming to direct their wrathful eyes to the most holy place, they beheld the veil of the temple instantly rent from the lofty roof to its lowest border; the suppliants were overwhelm'd with the terrors of the grave, which arrested all their powers, till fear and horror dispelling their lethargy, induc'd them to fly from death. Oh, what heavenly consolation flows from the thought of the dear deceas'd, who, while he was expiring on the cross, wrapt the earth in darkness, bade the rocks shake, and unveil'd to the eyes of mortals his tremendous glory!

While he spake, the hearers sat in silent amazement, yet little comfort penetrated their dejected hearts. Thus the traveller, in descending a steep and lofty precipice, beholds not the beauties of the clear smiling day in the flowery vale. In vain does its radiancy spread through the illumin'd groves: in vain it roves in the meandering stream; for his fears extend a cloud over all the beauties of spring.

Lazarus still observing their fix'd sadness, thus affectionately resum'd: Is it no consolation to you, that God bears testimony to our dear deceas'd Lord by such signs and wonders? O let this be a powerful consolation! Rejoice too, that Mary, the taught of God, and whom you lov'd, will weep no more!

Magdalen, now, with tearless eyes, hastily stepp'd up to him, and said, Thy words, like the voice of an angel, bring us comfort, and we will receive consolation from them; for they are as refreshing as the breeze in parching heat. Thy celestial sister is then gone to Christ? Hast thou no more angelic words, no predictions of our death? Thou wert once in the state of the dead: O hadst thou then no intimations, whether thy friends would soon be discharg'd from this world of sorrow, soon be

admitted to celestial joy? O speak, if thou know'st, and no longer conceal from us, whether this will soon be our blissful lot? He continuing silent, she resum'd, Since our lives are to be lengthen'd, O thou heavenly Judge, whose judgments are a great deep, may we live to see judgments accumulated on those who slew thine innocent, thy blameless Son!

Midnight had for some time spread its sable curtain. This, when spent in prayer with Christ, had been as gladdening to his followers as the vernal day; but, under their present distress, was fraught with images of terror; and now the more terrible, as the voice of the divine Intercessor was silenc'd by death. Their lamentations gradually subsided, and alleviating tears no longer wetting their now dry eyes; the weight of cold affliction immoveably oppress'd their souls, while sympathy for their sufferings dimm'd the eyes of the attending angels. Meanwhile Salem and Selith, John and Mary's angels, thus convers'd:

Though we, O Salem, know the glorious conclusion of what appears so sorrowful, yet are we little less afflicted than they. They are mortal, and cannot, my celestial brother, know the joys that await them; but wert thou to reveal thyself array'd in splendor, and to shew them the happy issue of this maze of affliction, they would esteem it an illusive dream: their minds would be still fix'd on the gloomy labyrinth, which even overcomes me.

I wish serenity, O Selith, contemplate the divine plan, and thou art too deeply affected by compassion.—I now acknowledge that thou suffer'st like man; for when we are solely penetrated with human sufferings, our thoughts resemble those that are human. The Most High afflicts in order to improve them, and to render them more happy than they could have been without drinking of the cup of sorrow, when, at the time of rejoicing, the blessed shall be admitted to drink of the river of life.

Celestial friend, return'd Selith, the griefs which rend the heart of the tender mother, too much overcloud me;

but Salem will forgive me. I saw her extreme anguish at the cross. Do thou kindly spread over her a healing sleep; I will hover round her with reviving visions, and prevent the approach of new sufferings. Rest from pain has not yet been bestow'd on her. O the raptures she will feel, when, instead of still contemplating on death, she will awake to the joys which flow from God's right hand!

While they were thus conversing, a short sleep alighted on John's tearful eye, which Salem perceiving, by a dream, pregnant with bliss, fill'd his heart with ecstasy. He seem'd to remove him to Lebanon, whose cedars wav'd their tops at his approach. The morning, more beautifully array'd in gold and purple than ever he had seen, shone thro' the branches of the dewy grove, while the purling of the brook in the vale below, was as sweet as the music of the temple. Soon in louder strains resounded the ravishing harmony of the celestial harps and voices, chanting—Happy son of the heavenly mother, dry up thy tears! Dry up thy tears, thou happy son of the heavenly mother!

The disciple seem'd not to dry up his tears; these, the vision, brought by the seraph, could not yet suppress; for, even in sleep, the briny stream ceas'd not to flow. The radiant morn now appear'd overcast, and the joint melody of the celestial harps and voices dy'd away. Meanwhile the immortal seem'd to convey him swiftly to the grove, where the astonish'd disciple saw men, with rage flaming in their eyes, hew down a cedar, so large that Lebanon shook at its fall. The cedar was form'd into a cross; awful sight! but, with pleas'd astonishment, he saw it shoot forth palms. The scene of the disciple's vision was now remov'd from Lebanon to Eden, where he beheld a celestial glory, that infinitely exceeded the splendor of gold and purple. He now heard more sublime choirs, and his heart was fill'd with the sweetest sensations of joy.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XIII.

The Argument.

Gabriel assembles the angels and the risen about the sepulchre, where they wait the Messiah's resurrection. The emotions of Cneus, the Roman officer on guard. The soul of Mary, Lazarus's sister, comes into the assembly of the saints. Obaddon, the angel of death, calls Satan and Adramelech, and orders them to leave the Dead Sea, and either to repair to Hell, or to the Sepulchre. Satan determines on the latter, and Adramelech on the former, but after changing his resolution, dares not put it in execution. The angel of death leaves it to Abaddona either to come to the Sepulchre or not, as he pleases. The glory of the Messiah descends from Heaven. Adam and Eve pay their adorations. The Messiah rises from the dead. The acclamations of the angels and the risen. The seven martyrs, the sons of Thirza, sing a hymn of triumph. Some of the saints come down to him from the clouds, and at last Abraham and Adam. The soul of a Pagan brought before him, on which he judges the soul, and disappears. Gabriel orders Satan to fly to Hell. Some of the soldiers of the guard, and also Cneus, enter the assembly of the priests. Philo puts an end to his life, and Obaddon meeting his soul in Gehenna, conducts it to Hell.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XIII.

THE ancestors of the divine Jesus, rejoicing in their being rais'd from the dead, remain'd near the tombs in which they had slept, while the angels sought for those who had been sanctify'd by the Redeemer: but often was their joy damp'd by grief, and oft they shook their purple wings, defil'd by the terrestrial air, as by the dust which rises from the foot of the traveller.

Gabriel still continu'd at the sepulchre, and Eloa on one of the suns that revolve round in the heavens, waiting the descent of Christ's glory. But now the angel of the sepulchre soar'd upward thro' the creation, to behold the celestial signs of the resurrection. Long had he fix'd his eye on an effulgent star which, in its circular course, shot by another; at this sight, the expecting seraph's eyes beam'd a brighter fire; he turn'd; his motion was as a storm; his descent as lightning; and, returning to the sepulchre, he call'd, with a voice as loud as that of the forest-bending tempest, Come, ye celestials, to the grave! Thither the angels and patriarchs soon hasted, and soon was the sepulchre of the Chief among the dead, environ'd by an august company of celestial beings. Over the sepulchre, as in the centre of the circle, sat Gabriel, on a golden cloud, introducing the souls of the redeem'd into eternal life. But the angel of death, who, in Jehovah's name, had announc'd to Jesus the separation of his immortal essence from the body, now slowly mov'd to the sepulchre, and sunk into Gabriel's arms,

saying, All around me is night. The earth trembles, and the darkness of the hill of death is deeper than the blackness of the midnight gloom. Never have my immortal powers fail'd in performing the commands of the great Jehovah, except in the last, under which I still faint. Renew my strength, thou ray of the Omnipotent, that soon, issuing from the grave, will rise to the right hand of the Father! The immortal then lean'd on the rock, where rested the sacred body of Jesus.

Ah, what sweet longings do I experience! cry'd Abraham. How blissful the thought! I shall see him! I shall see the Conqueror of death rise to immortal life! Hallelujah! hallelujah! hallelujah! I shall see him as he is! I shall see his body rise from the dead. Hallelujah!

My soul shall rejoice in the Lord! cry'd David. I shall rejoice on his ascending from the sepulchre! Ye pious, whose bodies still are dust, and ye who can never know corruption, your joy cannot equal ours! O what will Jesus experience! He, the Son of the Eternal Father! He, who has felt more than the sufferings of mortality, and the terrors of death! O Asaph, added he, embracing him, the Saviour who suffer'd the painful death of the cross, will soon awake!

He then, with inward joy, fix'd his longing eyes on his Redeemer's sepulchre: so a dying saint looks up to Heaven, and from thence receives the rapturous assurance of the endless felicity that awaits him. Asaph, steadily looking at the psalmist, caught his holy transports. David's countenance beam'd increas'd radiance: his breath was harmony: he soar'd aloft; the air resounded, and now he animates the harp, and the speaking instrument, though yet unaccompany'd with words, diffus'd triumph: then, fir'd with inspiration, both his voice and strings pour'd forth a stream of rapture. So the highly favour'd apostle, to whom the glories of the apocalypse were display'd, beheld, standing on the heavenly Sion, a lamb, cover'd with radiant wounds, and the rich blood of salvation; round him was a great multitude rejoicing, with the Father's name written on their

forehead. In their animating hands the harps resounded like the voice of thunder; for they sang the Son whose radiant wounds beam'd eternal life into the souls below.

Joseph, cloth'd with light, and bearing in his hand the triumphant palm, sang to his brother, who, in his embraces, had once pour'd forth a flood of joyful tears; O dearest Benjamin! what raptures do I feel in recalling the hour when the Almighty Disposer of all events permitted me, in my former state, to make myself known to thee! But how infinitely superior is the celestial joy, and pleasure, and triumph, for which we now, with eager expectation, wait! O thou Brother of the redeem'd! thou first among the heirs of light! throw off the veil of blood and dust that covers thy face, and again shew thyself in glory! We thirst, we pant to behold thee with all thy radiant wounds, the Conqueror of death. The reconciliation plann'd by the Father, and which thou hast accomplish'd, is of perpetual efficacy; and at length will arrive the joyful hour conceal'd from the earth, conceal'd even from the bless'd host of Heaven—that hour when the fullness of the Gentiles shall come, and the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shall be brought to the gracious Redeemer, crucify'd for them! when the Saviour, impatient of any farther restraint, will exclaim, I am Jesus!—The belov'd, weeping, will hang about his neck, and He distribute to them crowns and the festal robe of innocence. How will then the celestial messengers proclaim, from star to star, the resplendent lights that have issu'd from the depths of wisdom! How will the adoring angels then bow before the Eternal Father! O Primordeal Source of being! O King, who alone hast immortality! praise, worship, and honour, be to Thy name forever and ever!

The soft harp and sounding trumpet accompany'd the joyful song, with modulations, audible to the ears of the bless'd alone. Not unanimated flow the heavenly hymns: these are the rapturous products of original inspiration, the first fruits of bliss and grateful triumph, to us un-

known: yet they are sometimes heard by the dying, and accompany them into eternal life. Isaiah, the prophet of the silent Lamb, heard the seraphs, when, far from the opening grave, they, covering their faces, sang—Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory! while their fervent voices shook the gates of the temple.

Fill'd with the ravishing expectation of the Mediator's resurrection, the bless'd continu'd expressing their sensations in vocal and instrumental harmony, sometimes in separate, and sometimes in united, melody: for as yet they felt not the silence of joy, nor the raptures of mute felicity.

Ezekiel descended from the clouds to a tomb on mount Olivet, and sang, I once saw in a vision, dry bones scatter'd over the plain: at the command of the Lord of Life and Death, I bade them revive; they came together: a rapid wind diffus'd life into the dead, and a host innumerable rose on their feet! Still is my heart fill'd with transport at the idea of that wonderful sight. I myself have just been rais'd from the dead! bless'd—bless'd be he by whom I am rais'd! His body is not, as ours was, subject to corruption, and it will soon rise triumphant, the Conqueror of Death. Hail Thou who art the Resurrection and the Life! Under thy shadow shall all in the Heaven of Heavens assemble! Death, the last of enemies, shall be destroy'd, and Thou wilt resign up the sovereignty to the Father, that God may be all in all. Hallelujah! Joy glow'd in the countenance of the enraptur'd prophet, and Gabriel, turning as swift as thought from the grave to the transported Ezekiel, cry'd, with a voice like the roaring of the sea, Hallelujah! God shall be all in all.

The sublime Isaiah then leaving the assembly of the bless'd, descended to Golgotha, and stood at the cross of the sacred dead. Daniel, the favourite of the Most High, also quitted the assembly of the bless'd, and stood at the cross, where, with a psaltery in their hands, they alternately sang:

Here! Here! he was wounded for our transgressions, and with his stripes are we heal'd!

Ah, for our sakes was He wounded! for our sakes was He bruis'd! He submitted to chastisement that we might have pardon, and by his stripes are we heal'd!

He was oppress'd and afflicted, yet he open'd not his mouth! As a lamb was he led to the slaughter!

From anguish and from judgment is he taken; but soon will he awake to life, and who, on Earth or in Heaven, is able to make known the duration of his felicity!

He was cut off for the transgressions of his people, and as a criminal was he put to death!

Now is finish'd the sacrifice for sin. His seed shall be numerous as the drops of the morning dew, and shall live forever!

By his heavenly wisdom shall the righteous servants of God make many righteous, and the heirs of glory; for the sins of the world hath he done away!

Who is he that came up from Cedron? In the power of the divine strength he came to bear the sins of man!

It was Christ, a teacher of righteousness! Christ, mighty to save! whose wounds trickled on this hill of death! Whose blood, O Heaven of Heavens! ran down on the altar of atonement! His precious, his sacred blood, before whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!

Now, now is transgression finish'd! Righteousness and salvation shall flourish! Praise him the great Accomplisher! Praise him, for he is anointed! On this hill of death was the Holy One anointed! Hallelujah!

Transported with these ideas of the rising Victim, the saints repeated, with a sound like that of breezes whispering through the tree of life, Yes, on this hill of death was the Holy One anointed! Hallelujah!

The guard at the sepulchre was now reliev'd by another party, who had seen Christ expire, the hills shake, and the rocks split. At the stone which clos'd the entrance, stood the Roman band, with Cneus, their commander,

who soon became absorb'd in thought. The silent night and silver moon led him to bewilder himself in an intricate maze of doubts, while he had no guide to direct his way. Leaning against the rock, he said to himself, Is he a son of God?—Of what God? Of the God of the Israelites?—Oh, why do I doubt the greatness of Jupiter?—Why am I unwilling to believe that he whom this weak people call Jehovah, is worthy to be known? How pusillanimous is this fear of conviction! How despicable does Jupiter appear! How great Jehovah, who styles himself the God of Gods, and by his actions, realizes the august title! Yet the Son of the great Jehovah was mortal! but, if he was no more than man, how could he be so great?

While he was thus absorb'd in thought, a messenger thus address'd him; Portia sends me to know from thee, whether all be quiet at the sepulchre, and whether any have assembled near the corpse: she at first thought to have come herself, but chang'd her mind. Cneus desir'd him to tell Portia that all was quiet, and that nobody had offer'd to come near the corpse. The messenger was then going, when Cneus calling after him, desir'd him to inform Portia, that whether Jesus would, or would not, rise again to life, was a subject that fill'd him with the greatest perplexity.

Cneus, again giving way to thought, said to himself, This lady is no less uneasy than I, about the issue of the mysterious history of this intomb'd sage. If he was not the Son of the Supreme God, it must be acknowledg'd that he was a pious man.—The Supreme God did I say? that is denying Jupiter, and shall I place him beneath Jehovah, whom I know not? Jehovah's miracles seem to bear a far greater stamp of truth than those attributed to Jupiter, or rather, have all the evidence of certainty. Had the conqueror of Israel invok'd Jupiter, the image of that God, like that of Dagon, would perhaps have fallen to the ground, and from his impotent hand would have dropp'd the useless thunder! Ah, what thoughts are these! What constrains me to renounce him

I have worshipp'd, and to sacrifice him to this tremendous, this unknown God, whose voice I feel speaking irresistably in the most secret recesses of my heart! O thou whom I ardently pant to know, make thyself known to me!

Thus he mus'd, with uplift eyes, till his head sunk down on his breast. Ah, why, added he, did not I see this pious man perform his miracles? Why did I neglect hearing his instructions? He is now dead, and incapable of conveying them. O thou unknown! my soul bewilders itself in quest of thee! O that I could understand the instructions of thy prophets! O that the veil that hides them from mine eyes was remov'd! At the very cross I might have ask'd him some important questions: but now he is silent. But will he continue so forever? Can the dead revive?—The holy man himself assur'd his followers that he would. This his enemies say, and hence we are plac'd to guard his body. Should he not return to life, instead of rewarding my inquiries with divine knowledge, will be all inexplicable darkness. Thus Cneus bewilder'd himself in the dark path to the Deity, no helping hand yet leading him to the heights of wisdom.

Now, into the exalted assembly of the risen, the angel Chebar brought the lovely soul of Mary, who slid with the silver sound from an ethereal cloud. Benoni receiv'd her, saying, O Mary, thou didst not see the Redeemer die, but thou shalt see him rise from the dead: By the blood of the Lamb hast thou overcome; take, therefore, the psaltery, and be thou one of the celestial choir. May I presume, said she, to mingle with the glorious host, on whom, for ages past, crowns and palms have been conferr'd? O Benoni, how happy am I! What mercy has the gracious Author of Life and Death shewn in choosing the hour of my decease! I shall, in this bless'd assembly see the Redeemer rise from the dead! Admit me among you, ye saints of God! Ye brethren! my brethren and my belov'd, forever receive me! for the Father of Mercies, who has shewn favour

both to you and me, hath sent me! O ye celestial community, the triumphant bridegroom's bride, we here feel a repose hitherto unknown: joys, of which we had not before the most distant idea! How freely do we here drink of the river of life! Oh, with what transcendent faculties, fitted for tasting the bliss of salvation, hast thou enrich'd the souls whom Thou hast call'd to inherit Thy glory! A bliss of perpetual duration! We shall be ever with Thee, the object of our love! What joyful thanks, what rapturous praise should we offer Thee, for this ecstatic prospect! I am lost in wonder, love, and grateful transports! Thy bounty knows no end! it is infinite and everlasting, like thyself.

Trembling she ceas'd, fill'd with unutterable joy. The enraptur'd circle of the heirs of life then sung to their accompanying harps, He is infinite! Infinite is the Father of existence and love! Sooner will the New Earth be involv'd in night, and the New Heavens in gloom, than the overflowing stream of thy mercies fail to refresh the thirsty soul! Behold its spring rises at the foot of the throne, and falls from the empyrean Heaven, from earth to earth, into regions luminous and obscure. The bless'd hear the sound; the sons of light hear it round the worlds, and flock to feed on raptures! O ye redeem'd, ye brethren of the decease'd, delay not, but haste to the stream of felicity! Ye who come with trembling feet have a Helper to support you, even he who, with broken heart-strings, loudly cry'd, It is finish'd. As the spent labourer, after a toilsome day, resigns himself to sleep, so the Mighty One slumbers in the sepulchre; the Lion of Juda slumbers in the shade! Hadst thou, O Hell, drank less of the cup of vengeance, thou wouldst be silent, lest the Mighty One who sleeps should awake, and rise from the concealing tomb: but he will rise even to the right hand of the Father, and the incens'd Lamb shall tread thee under his feet. Thy desarts shall become more dreary, and thine abysses sink deeper under the terrible steps of the incens'd Lamb.

At these words Obaddon, the angel of death, rose from

the sepulchre, and left the holy assembly, in order to fulfil the orders he had receiv'd, which were, that when the assembly of the saints should denounce the judgments of Hell to be at hand, he should haste to Satan and Adramelech, who were confin'd in the Dead Sea. He wrapp'd himself in thick darkness, and standing on the shore, call'd up the accurs'd. With the noise of a storm they stood before him. The angel of death then threw aside the darkness with which he was encompass'd, except that on his front, which still retain'd the gloom of a thunder cloud, spreading before him to the Dead Sea. Satan, now summoning up his enfeebled powers, thus address'd Obaddon: Happy, almost almighty, slave, what tidings hast thou brought? To thy foul slanders, for ages past, said the angel of death, no answer have I return'd. He who was dead and is alive, orders ye instantly to fly into the abyss, or to attend me to the hill where he was crucify'd. Near that hill of death he rises. No longer than I brandish this flaming sword shall ye see him! Then he shall wound thy head! abhorr'd sinner, he demands not thy worship! Thou art unworthy! If ye follow not me, remain here, or fly to Hell, where hissing, mockery, and the roar of loud laughter await ye! for many of your followers saw how, at Eloa's first command, ye fled.

Satan cast at him a furious look, yet stood aloof; for from Obaddon's sword stream'd expanding flames. The foe both to God and Satan tore up the fragment of a rock, and dashing it against his own forehead, stamp'd on the fallen shivers, and began to blaspheme the Eternal; but soon his impious tongue was made to cease. Choose, I say, exclaim'd the angel of death, sheathing his flaming sword in clouds of smoke: but they still hesitated.

Now Abbadona drew near, and as he pass'd along, cast his eyes on Adramelech and Satan, fearless of their rage and vindictive pride. Then approaching nearer to the angel, thus spake: Though thou art a messenger of vengeance, yet, O angel of God! thou art not insensible to

pity. May not I, since it is permitted to these rebellious, see the divine Messiah rise? How can I presume that I shall be allow'd the honour of worshipping him? No, welcome, welcome shall be the invisible, the omnipotent hand, that shall strike both me and them to the dust, might I but see the Redeemer, the Conqueror rise.

Satan indignant heard, and with stammering rage, cry'd, Thou slave of Hell and not of God! thou, of slaves the most wretched.—Him the angel of death, with rapid speech, instantly interrupted. Satan, in my presence, be thou silent. For thee, Abbadona, I have no orders. How long thou art permitted to remain on earth I know not; nor whether thou wilt be allow'd to see the resurrection of the Lord of Life and Glory. I can only inform thee, that his sepulchre is encompass'd by hosts of angels, and by the righteous, by His power, call'd forth from the grave. As to these accurs'd, they are allow'd to see him, that his triumph over them may begin with punishing their impious guilt and obdurate pride. In this, Abbadona, thou hast no concern: but deceive not thyself, thou canst not see him with my raptures. Thou canst not view him with the joy of the redeem'd.—No, not with transport, answer'd Abbadona; not with joy; yet let me see him, let me see him.

Abject slave as thou art, cry'd Adramelech to the angel of death, thou mentionedst the name of Eloa. Yes, I go to Hell, but woe be to him who there presumptuously dares to mock at me! I'll bury him under rocks heap'd on rocks. Then, turning to Abbadona, added, Why dost thou not follow me, thou most abject of angels? now no longer an angel, but a servile spirit. Thou fearest, and art not deceiv'd, that I will bind thee with adamantine chains, to the lowest step of my throne, on which I will sit, resting my foot on thy neck. But first thou shalt fall a sacrifice on that hill to thine abject servility.

Abbadona, trembling with indignation, answer'd, with a look of sadness, It is not thy storming words, thou apostate, that terrify me; but that the righteous spirits, the angels, and the great Jehovah are my foes, and them

I fear. He then turn'd aside, and Adramelech fled. I follow thee, said Satan to the angel of death, stammering with rage, while the gloom on his forehead, mark'd with the scars of thunder, encreas'd as he follow'd. They spread their wings, while Abbadona stood wrapp'd in perplexity and suspense. Adramelech now suddenly turn'd, revolving in his obdurate heart a blasphemy as black as Hell, which he resolv'd to pour forth with a loud voice in the midst of the holy assembly, and call'd out, I follow thee, angel. Turn back, call'd the destroyer, with the voice of thunder, thou shalt not see the resurrection. Blindness shall strike thine eyes, blindness prompt thy speed, and a hideous howling shall follow thee. Already blindness seiz'd his eyes, and behind him swell'd the howling storm, impelling him reluctant. Convuls'd with tremulous agonies, he fled. Quick, irresistible and nameless terrors pursued him, while the incessant howl, like the judicial trumpet, call'd, Woe to thee! woe, woe to thee! The mountains in the nearest stars seem'd to him to shake, and torn from their roots, to fall on him with destructive crush.

Meanwhile the patriarchs and the seraphims heard, far in the heavens, Jehovah proceeding along the solar way. The harmony of the revolving worlds was silent at the voice of thunder. Already had a star hasted from its orbit to the sun. Already the whole creation stood still. The patriarchs heard the flying storm proceeding from the Heaven of Heavens, and resounding from star to star, as from hill to hill. It advanc'd to the earth with glowing front, and the flame of the Lord approach'd like the suns, when sent forth from God's creative hand, to rule each earthly globe. Eloa then shot like a ray of light into the assembly of the risen, proclaiming, The hour is come! The hour of glory is at hand! With the day-spring will the body of the Redeemer of sinners awake from the dead! Ye hear the footsteps of the Almighty!

He then mov'd down to the sepulchre. The mighty tempest, a witness throughout the heavens of him who

liveth for ever, now abated its violence, lest the earth should fly before it. The thunder was restrain'd, and only the roaring winds were heard, before which the forests of Judea bow'd to the sepulchre. The earth shook; Mount Seir, Pisga, Arnon, and Hermon, with cloud-capt Lebanon, trembled; the tops of Carmel and Lebanon were afraid; the waters of Egypt and meandring Jordan fled back to their source, yet the sepulchre continu'd unmov'd, and the ponderous stone still lay before the open sepulchre. The inhabitants of heaven sank down, together with the risen, on their faces before the present Deity. Adam then sang aloud a triumphant hymn; so will sound throughout the earth the angelic trumpet, to celebrate the mighty deeds of the Most Holy. O Increate! once a weeping babe! a child endow'd with wisdom! the delight of God! the joy of sinners! then a heavenly teacher! a compassionate, benevolent worker of miracles! then a high priest, who offer'd himself, and went into the sanctuary, in behalf of sinners! then, ah! then was crucify'd, and dy'd! O Thou incomprehensible! Thou God of Love! how can we sufficiently praise thee for what thou hast done for us? Under thy feet thou hast brought death and sin, and receiv'd us to salvation. With transport we shall see thee rise. Ah, we have seen thee die! Awake, awake, death can no longer hold the Son of God. Behold thou com'st in the divine effulgence, as when thou call'dst forth the sun from darkness, then thou cam'st encircled with thousands of thousands of ministring spirits, preceded by the inspiring storm! Soon will the heavenly breeze, separating itself from the storm, awaken thy body. Behold the outskirts of the glory of the Lord beams down among the stars, while before it the ruddy morn tempers the effulgence of the divinity! Before him let all creatures bow the knee. Ye princes, lay down your crowns before him. He comes to lead captivity captive, and to give eternal life to those he has redeem'd! Breathe, thou divine breath, and awaken the corpse, whose wounds, when he is rais'd to the right hand of the Father, will outshine the sun,

and even the lights which illumine the Heaven of Heavens. But let me, with silent joy, lay my hand on my mouth.—O my children, who are still the sons of dust, especially ye few whom he has chosen to be the witnesses of his resurrection: ye whose eyes still shed tears of sorrow, from your knowing him in his humiliation and death, but not in his glory, nor the glories with which he rewards his followers, to all the divine, the ineffable blessings of his resurrection, do I consecrate you, my children! Bless'd be your conflicts! every victory of the strengthen'd! All your labours in the work of the Lord! In Heaven be they bless'd! Earthly blessings, which pass away, shall not be yours; but, when your souls quit their houses of clay, ye shall receive the victor's crown, and shall be set on the thrones of the elders, to judge the generations of men.

Eve, who, like Adam, became more radiant while looking on the resplendent glory as it descended through the Heavens, hearing the blessing deliver'd by the father of men, extended her arms towards the holy sepulchre, and thus gave vent to her emotions: Flow, flow, eternal source of bliss! rend asunder the rock, gush forth, and comfort the souls of all that thirst after thee! O stream that flows into the world of joy, receive into the refreshing breezes of thy shore, and to thy cooling shades, the spiritual pilgrim, that he may be strengthen'd in his course, and animated by the blissful expectation of his own resurrection! Hope, celestial light, brighten the eyes of the dying! thou hope of awaking and living with Christ, pour thy joys on those who are prepar'd to sleep in him! then they shall not fear the horrors of corruption! Bless'd hour, soon to break forth, pregnant with bliss! O hour of his awaking, on which depend a numberless number of never-dying lives! O what blessings are prepar'd for you, my children! Rend the rock, and stream forth, thou source of eternal life, thou shalt be enlarg'd to mighty rivers, even to the ocean of God!

The angel of the sepulchre now wing'd his flight through the clouds, towards Christ's resplendent glory.

As a thousand times a thousand of those who dy'd in God had lamented the fall, which was to extend to the judgment day, but is no longer to be deplor'd, let now the cry of the new-born, and the groan of expiring age ascend to Heaven, amidst the rapturous hymns of those who are purify'd by death. They too shall be purify'd by death, and at the dawn of the last day, forever will cease the babes' mournful cries, and the groans of conflicting age. Overpower'd by amazement, joy, and felicity, tears of gratitude will then flow from their uplifted eyes, their triumphant hymns will contend with the summoning trumpet, and even drown its mighty sound; for the righteous then will be a thousand times a thousand. Not less was the host which, at the sepulchre of the Lord, panted with longing expectation of what was to come, when Gabriel descended with the divine glory. Then the earth shook; Satan, like a mountain, and the guards of the sacred body, like little hills, were thrown down. Then from the sepulchre the immortal roll'd the stone, Jehovah himself rejoic'd, and Jesus arose.

How shall I utter what was now seen! how at a distance faintly mention the joy of those that saw the Redeemer's resplendent face! Too presumptuous is the ardent wish, and fruitless the effort, to ascend with these to Heaven!

At first a short silence reign'd around the forsaken sepulchre; but soon the favour'd assembly, radiant with salvation, sang with triumphant joy, like the morning stars at the birth of the creation. They sang thee, the Son, after thy conquest over death, not, as on the cross, with drooping head! but gloriously ascending over the rock of the open sepulchre, ineffably divine, adorn'd with victory, with victory! Hallelujah! with victory! gloriously triumphant over eternal death! Thou who art mighty! thou whose name is holy! thou to whom all knees shall bow, all in Heaven, in earth, and under the earth! thou whose birth Bethlehem saw, at whose death Calvary shook, and whom the grave has deliver'd up!—Sink down, ye depths, before the Conqueror, and

ye hills rise before him, and clap your hands! To this honour, ye archangels, strike your harps! ye first of thrones in the Heaven of Heavens arise! and ye human voices proclaim from the dust your joy that he lives! Before the eternal throne join to sing the inexpressible honours of the great Messiah! To him, ye angels, to him, our brother, who was flesh and bone of Adam, be everlasting praise.

O thou who art most mighty! cry'd the triumphant spirits; thou to whom our knees lowly bend, and all our powers bow with awful adoration! Thou great Beginner and great Accomplisher of our salvation, art now awak'd from death! Short was thy slumber, and thy awaking was sudden as the creation, when call'd into existence by thine almighty voice; when, at thy command, the suns roll'd, and round them the obedient worlds! O thou Alpha and Omega, the most gracious First and Last, in thee we live, and in thee are immortal!

They ceas'd. The risen Messiah favour'd them with the sight of his divine countenance; when, overcome by their ecstatic bliss, they fell down in silence.

The seven martyr'd sons, with their mother, now hasted to the celestial assembly, singing with holy triumph, Arise and shout, O earth, for thou hast been esteem'd worthy to receive into thy bosom, as into a mother's arms, the sacred body of Christ, the Redeemer! The first-born of the dead is risen, and all the heavens saw him rise! Earthquakes, from Golgotha to lofty Moriah, attended the Conqueror; with the mountain trembled the cross, and the pinnacles of the temple. Arise, O earth, in thy beauty! the glory of Christ ariseth on thee! Less celebrated wert thou in the heavens, when, after thy birth, thy first morning rose on thee. Many are thy sons, and many righteous shall be among them. As the mother of immortal children, thou shalt translate them into the Heavens, that, in the lucid robes of purity, they may rise victorious, singing the praises of the Redeemer. Shout, thou hill of death, louder than all the other hills of the earth! Rejoice, thou sepulchre, before

the mountain of God! At the last day, O earth, shalt thou, at the call of the omnipotent Son, deliver up the dead confin'd in thy bosom! Then shall be form'd a new earth. Then shall the sun rule no longer over thee, nor the moon, thy companion, accompany thee: on thee, as the dwelling-place of the righteous, will the divine glory shine; and he, whose precious blood dropp'd on Golgotha, will be thy light.

Thus sang the early martyrs, who already bore palms in their hands. Jedidoth, the last of martyrs, with Benoni and Mary, leaving the assembly of the bless'd, and each holding palms, descended from the clouds, and kneel'd on the stone which now no longer shut up the sepulchre. There, with a love above what man can feel or express, Mary said to the partakers of her bliss, Were I still in my former life, and my years in their early bloom, yet would my most affectionate love be death, when compar'd with this exalted fervor. Benoni, Jedidoth, see the King of Glory, how is his lustre attemper'd for you, ye lovely flowers of the heavenly Sharon! attemper'd for us! he likewise attempers himself for that cedar Eloa, whom he also created! He is another self of all the glorious elect!—Another, cry'd Eloa, joyfully approaching them with downward flight: to every one is he another self! To you, Daniel! Moses! Abraham! likewise to thee, thou chief angel of death! to thee, Salem! for these had descended to them: to thee, Mary, and to me! to you, Benoni and Jedidoth! to every one, according to his desire, the overflowing, the inexhaustible source of good! to each the most bounteous! to all the most deserving of their love! This elevated, this transporting idea, too exalted for human penetration, bears your souls aloft, and the only, the belov'd Son—through all eternity belov'd, and to all eternity the loving Son of the Eternal Father—absorbs all our thoughts, and our faculties are lost in the immensity of the divine goodness!

While the spirits and angels convers'd, the bless'd, in greater numbers, descending to the rock, surrounded their Mediator and Brother, rejoicing with other joy

than this world can give, or which they who walk in its gloom can conceive.

Abraham, with his hands lift up towards Heaven, said, O thou Son of Jehovah! (accompany me, ye jubilant harps of my children, in joyful notes: my harp shall lead the consecrated sounds:) Thou quittedst thy throne! from Heaven didst thou descend to this earth, and die! In all the worlds, before or since created, no events like these were ever seen! We behold the actions of the divine Redeemer irradiated by surrounding hosts! Ye fellow-worshippers, join the seraphs' exalted joys, which, O Eloa, beam down from Heaven.

Adam, at length immerging from a sea of raptures, and from the luminous streams in which he had been immers'd, thousands of thoughts, swift as the lightning's rapid flash, rush'd into his agitated soul. With eager eyes he flew from the clouds to the hill of death, and alighting at the cross, stretch'd out his arms to Jesus the Conqueror, crying, I swear by thee, who livest forever, that on the great day of the completion of all things, those who sleep shall awake, and death shall be no more!

The exaltation of the Messiah began with his awaking from the death of the cross, whence he ascended to the throne, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, where honour and praise awaited him, who willingly humbled himself, and descended from the mansions of glory to the dust of Golgotha. In vain did Eloa himself then strike the festive harp; in vain the bless'd spirits pour'd themselves forth in psalms to his praise, too inadequate were their efforts to the sublime, the sacred theme: how much then is it too high for me! Teach me, thou sacred muse of Sion, something of that glorious triumph, which, from its commencement in the abode of mortal sinners, rose in continual gradations to infinitude. O enable me, with intent eye, to follow him, who, in the lucid path, soar'd to the throne!

The Mediator affectionately look'd down on Adam, then gave a sign to an angel, who brought a soul that thus discours'd with his conductor: Who, thou resplen-

dent being, is that awful and sublime figure over that rocky hill?—Perceiv'st thou not, O soul, said the angel, the radiant bands around him?—Ah, I cannot turn my eyes from him to whom thou art leading me! He is the chief of this divine assembly. Join thy worship, return'd the angel, he is the Lord of men and angels, and thy Judge.—The soul then exclaim'd, O Jove, who rulest in Olympus! the greatest, the most glorious! O my conductor! with what terrors do thine eyes fill me! Am I before the austere Minos? Is there a passage from hence to black Cocytus? and does the thunder of Jupiter's oaths roar along the baneful stream? O my inflexible leader! deign'st thou not to answer the questions I trembling utter? Now to the soul spake the Mediator, There are no such beings as Jupiter and Minos. It is me whom the oppress'd invoke as their Lord and Judge. Then to the angel he signify'd the future state of the deceas'd. Thus in slow gradations advanc'd the Son's exaltation. To the witnesses Jesus said, Before I rise to my Father, oft shall I be seen on Tabor; there shall ye meet me. Jesus then disappear'd, and they mov'd to Tabor.

Still motionless on the rock of the sepulchre, lay Satan, struck by a look of the risen Mediator. He heard Gabriel coming toward him as a storm, and having, with labouring efforts, rais'd himself, beheld the Redeemer's messenger, who cry'd, Cast thyself down into thine abyss. Thou [illegible]terest on earth. Wert thou capable of instruction, thou must know that for Finite to contend with Infinite, is to be forever subdu'd. But thou art harden'd against conviction. Avaunt! fly, with thy plans of fresh rebellions, to the gloom of the regions of despair. But I forbear denouncing the thundering curse. Avaunt. Satan stretch'd his wings, yet again linger'd in the wilderness, and, from a towering rock, fix'd his eyes on the dreary prospect. Gabriel then, encompass'd by the terrors of God, pursu'd him in a tempest, when, spurning away the rock, he rush'd through the wide creation down to Hell; but enter'd not, till after he had spent some irksome days at the gate.

Already had the alarm'd assembly of the priests spent two nights at the house of Caiaphas, and still waking, began to see the returning morn. In silent anxiety they sat, waiting the issue. The stone on which they had set the seal, the Roman guard, and the safety of the body of the deceas'd, employ'd their agitated minds, which labour'd under the keenest pangs of perturbation. Now came the third day, a day of fears and apprehensions.

The Roman guard at the sepulchre began now to recover from their fright, and to discourse with each other. How was it with thee? I felt the earth shake, and was thrown to the ground. So it was with me, said his companion. Another, faintly leaning on his comrade, cry'd, How terribly the earth shook! It threw me against the rock. At the roaring blast, said another, the stone before the sepulchre split! I thought the world was at an end. No, another cry'd, the stone is not split, though it no longer lies at the entrance of the sepulchre.

The centurion now call'd, If ye are able to speak, answer to your names. They did so. Cneus then going near the sepulchre, observ'd that it was empty, and the stone roll'd away. Fill'd with the greatest surprise, he call'd one of the soldiers aside, bade him haste to the pontiff's palace, and bring him word whether a council was sitting there, adding that he would follow him. The others eagerly ask'd the hasty messenger whither he was going; he answer'd, to the high-priest's, and continu'd his way, while they follow'd at a distance.

As a sudden thought darts into the mind of one bewilder'd in mazy researches, so unexpected came the messenger, with panting haste, and address'd the amaz'd council, saying, To no purpose was your sending us to keep guard at the sepulchre. This morning the earth shook with great violence! the massy stone started from the entrance of the tomb, and the body is not there! Then, turning his back, he left them. Struck with the tidings, they started from their seats, and stood motionless monuments of astonishment and terror. Soon was the messenger follow'd by three other Romans, who,

abruptly entering the hall, exclaim'd, as with one voice, See ye to yourselves, for the great stone spontaneously roll'd away; the earth shook, and there came a terrible whirlwind; after which we found the sepulchre empty. We first fell, half dead, on the ground, and afterwards saw the empty tomb. A rolling clap of thunder then confirm'd the report. Philo, struck with madness, now bursts into a hideous laughter; his speech forsook him, and the priests sunk into a silence, as profound as that of death.

Caiaphas, at length recovering his spirits, sent for the elders, who soon came; more of the guard likewise resorted to the palace, and, observing the countenances of the assembly, said, We see that ye are no strangers to what has pass'd this morning.—Thanks to the gods that we are yet alive! How could you, ye priests, impiously put to death the son of the God of thunder? His sepulchre was empty; you may go and satisfy yourselves of this truth. Here the high priest, addressing himself to the guard, said, Go in to my servants, and warm yourselves by the fire. Was your officer with you? He was, said they, and fell to the ground as well as we. He likewise saw the sepulchre open. Caiaphas then went out, and gave orders that the guard should be liberally entertain'd with provisions and wine.

Caiaphas, with unsteady steps, return'd to his seat, with his mind fill'd with painful agitations. We must buy over these Romans, said he, or all Judea will be in a tumult. But what is life to me? O Saddoc! I almost question the truth of thy doctrine! But is not this a deception, occasion'd by their apprehensions? There was, indeed, an earthquake! but that they actually saw the sepulchre empty is not so certain. Here he was interrupted by the entrance of the officer of the guard. They all arose, and respectfully stepp'd back; on which he said, Ye are at no loss, I am sure, to know me. I likewise saw him on the cross, and even then believ'd that there dy'd the son of the gods.—Ye have heard what pass'd at the sepulchre.

In the meantime came Obaddon, Philo's angel: his piercing eyes flam'd destruction: his raven hair, in large locks, overspread his shoulders, and he stood fix'd as a rock. With fury he look'd on Philo, yet suppress'd his terrific voice, denouncing death. Hail, black ensanguin'd hour! said Philo to himself, Hail, hour of death, quicken thy last advances! Thou vale of Benhinnon, likewise hail! While these last words pass'd silent through his mind, seven-fold terrors rush'd on Philo, who, with a ghastly smile and affected composure, went up to Cneus, and, recovering his speech, stammer'd forth, How! the grave open, and no corpse in it? No corpse at all, return'd the officer. Durst thou, O Roman, swear to it by Jupiter? Jupiter, said Cneus, is an empty name, when compar'd to the truth of what I say. Did I mean to swear, I would assert this truth by Jehovah himself, whom I now worship. But will not such wretches as you credit me without an oath? Here Philo, with roaring voice, cry'd, Ah, mark him! he saw it open, and no corpse in it; but will not swear to it. Yet know, O Roman, that thou hast done more than swear. Then snatching the officer's sword from his side, and seizing it with both his hands, he plung'd it deep into his breast, and, throwing it from him, fell weltering in his blood. With horrid rage he then tore open the wound, and throwing the blood towards Heaven, exclaim'd, Behold, thou Nazarene, I die! and instantly expir'd. When Cneus, taking up his sword, walk'd up to the corpse, and then letting it fall, cry'd, To thee, to horror, to endless darkness and despair, I devote this steel. After which he abruptly left the assembly.

The convuls'd soul of the suicide follow'd a phantom which was to direct its gloomy path. The angel of death was now in Benhinnon's murderous vale, and the soul of Philo, turning about, perceiv'd him; but words are as little able to describe his tremendous figure, as the thunder of his voice, when he call'd out, My name is Ephod Obaddon, or Sevenfold Revenge. I am now an angel of destruction. It was I who destroy'd the first-born of

Egypt. Thou art now in Gehenna, and I shall conduct thee to the infernal gulph. They then wing'd their way.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XIV.

The Argument.

Jesus appears to Mary Magdalen, nine other devout women, and Peter. This they relate to the assembly. Thomas doubts the reality of his appearance. Jesus discovers himself to Matthias and Cleophas, at Emmaus. Thomas goes into a sepulchre on the mount of Olives, where he laments his incredulity, and prays. One of the risen, whom he knows not, converses with him. Matthias and Cleophas return. Lebbeus, likewise, is not yet convinc'd. Jesus appears to the assembly.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XIV.

STILL plung'd in distress, and panting for consolation, the mournful assembly continu'd in the house near the temple. Thus saints on the verge of life, insensible of their approaching felicity, walk lamenting by the vale which precludes the future joys of Heaven. The devout women now mingled oil, spices, and also their tears, to anoint the Messiah's body. As the wise virgins watch'd to feed their lamps, and kept themselves ready to meet the bridegroom at his first appearance; so ye, the devout attendants of your Lord, with active sedulity, held yourselves prepar'd by the early dawn. Scarce was the night withdrawn, when Magdalen the wife of Cleophas, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna, with Salome the sister of the mourning mother, and Mary the mother of the sons of Zebedee, left the disciples. At their departure the mother of the Holy Deceas'd, embracing them, said, Ye, my belov'd, will see him again, which I shall not. Go, in the name of the Lord, may he be with you!

They departed in silence, in the cool dawn of the rising day. On going along, a difficulty arose in their minds, how they should remove the stone from the sepulchre, yet this did not retard their walk. We, said Mary Magdalen, will do all we can, and, as far as we are able, will preserve the precious body from putrefaction. Thus saying, they hasted forward with redoubled speed.

Gabriel now sat on the stone which had been roll'd

away, and thus address'd Eloa and Abdiel, who were near him. See the witnesses approach. That the splendour of my seraphic glory may not overpower them, I will assume the appearance of a youth; and do ye, till they shall be more able to bear the lustre of the immortals, appear to them as men.

The Mediator now look'd down from the veil by which he was conceal'd, on the angels and the devout women who approach'd, rejoicing with that divine joy purchas'd by his blood. The inhabitant of Magdala, drawn by love, came first to the sepulchre, and finding it open and the body gone, turn'd amaz'd, and calling to the others, hasted back towards Jerusalem. Not so her companions: they advanc'd undismay'd, and soon their active eyes saw, on the stone which had been roll'd away, a youth of a resplendent appearance, who had a garment white as snow, and with the voice of joy remov'd their solicitude. Fear not, said he; I know you seek the crucify'd Jesus. He is not here, but is risen, as he himself declar'd that he should. Draw near, and see the place where the divine Jesus lay. Thus saying, he led them into the sepulchre, and then added, Go, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and behold, he goeth before ye into Galilee: there ye shall see him. They still remain'd irresolute and trembling; on which two angels appear'd in shining vestures. The devout women, still more afraid, stood with downcast looks, till one of the angels said, Why seek ye the living among the dead? Jesus is not here, but is risen. Remember ye not what he said, while he was yet in Galilee? The Son of Man must be deliver'd into the hands of sinners, and be crucify'd, and on the third day rise again. They now no longer hesitated, but, wing'd with animating joy, flew to the disciples, as the messengers of glad tidings.

Peter and John were now coming, and Mary Magdalen was returning with them, when John said to his companions, The lower way, by those bushes, is the shortest. As he led, the others follow'd. These roads

were separated by a hill, which intervening, hinder'd the devout women and the disciples from seeing each other as they pass'd. Thus pilgrims to the New Jerusalem, the affinity of whose correspondent souls speak them made for each other, are often near, yet never unite, and their first interview is in that bless'd mansion, where they are mutually surpris'd that, in this state, they never met. John now hasting before, Cephas ask'd his female companion, if the body was taken away by the priests? and she answering that she could not tell, he observ'd, that it was reported they had been so careful to preserve it, that they had put their seal to the stone which clos'd the sepulchre, and that some wretches must therefore have taken it away, for the sake of the burial clothes.

John had by this time reach'd the sepulchre, and saw the linen lying on the ground, but, check'd by timid reverence, avoided going in. Peter, soon coming up, enter'd the sepulchre without hesitation; the head-cloth he saw lie apart, and not folded up with the other linen. John, now prompted by Peter's example, enter'd the tomb, and having also examin'd it, the two disciples left Mary, who, being agitated with various thoughts, stay'd at the sepulchre, while they went away, silently meditating on the important event.

Meanwhile Mary, standing by the grave, look'd in, and hastily wip'd away her tears, which obstructed her sight. Many an eager look she, with anxious heart, cast round the sepulchre, and, tho' there were now angels in the tomb, she scarce perceiv'd them; for she only sought for Jesus. Thus the panting roe seeks only the fluid stream; the shining sun attracts not its downcast eyes, nor does it feel the forest's waving shade. Why, O woman, weepest thou? said one of the messengers of joy. Ah, said she, they have taken him away whom my soul loveth, and I know not where they have laid him. Then turning aside from the sepulchre, before her stood Jesus; but she knew him not. Why weepest thou? said he. Whom dost thou seek? But this he spake not with the voice with which he had utter'd the doctrines of eternal

life; when, supposing him to be the gardener, she answer'd, If thou hast taken him away, tell me, I pray, where thou hast carry'd him? Tell me in what gloomy recess is he laid, that I may haste and find him? Thus, near ineffable bliss, mourns a soul, dear to the Lord, under the last agonizing sense of the mortality of her terrestrial frame! she lies struggling with death, and thirsting after support, lamenting before her Saviour, and so terrify'd at the approach of her last trial, that, instead of the merciful Redeemer, she only sees an offended Judge! But, O the bliss which succeeds these tears! Mary, in the bitterness of her anguish, turn'd her face from him of whom she was inquiring of Jesus: from him she turn'd her face; but, like the harps around the throne, accompanying the songs of the bless'd, when they sing the praises of the Lamb that was slain: but even more sweet and affectionate than harps and triumphant hymns, to the devout mourner, sounded the voice of Jesus, saying, Mary! She heard and knew the voice of her Lord, and, in the sudden tumult of her joy, fell trembling at his feet, and casting her fix'd eyes on him, vainly strove to express her emotions, and scarce could she, with languid breath, utter Rabboni! With trembling hands she then grasp'd the feet of the Saviour, who, with a look of benignity, said, Hold me not. Some time shall I continue with thee, and thou shalt see me again. I have not yet ascended to my Father. Go to my brethren, and tell them, I go to my Father and your Father! to my God and your God!

Jesus disappearing, she hasted to communicate the joyful message. Salome, with her companions, were near the door of the house which contain'd the mournful assembly, when He, who had disappear'd from Mary, met them during the rising day. They all knew him who was now no longer among the dead, and Jesus saying to them, All hail! they trembling, fell at his feet. Be not afraid, said he, but go and tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. He then vanish'd from their sight.

These witnesses, fill'd with unutterable joy, hasted forward with the gladdening message. Peter and John had before return'd, and had spread a gloom over the dejected assembly; when lo! the witnesses of him that liveth enter'd. Hear us, ye mourners, said they: listen to what we have seen. We have beheld him living, and have seen his angels; first, one at the sepulchre, and then two others. What, O Salome, did they say? for, frighted at these celestial messengers, I did not perfectly understand them.—Here Thomas, stepping forward, interrupted them, saying, Ye were, perhaps, too much affrighted to know what you saw or heard.—Ah, thou disciple of Jesus, said Salome, alarm us not with thy doubts; we are amaz'd and fill'd with joy. He who liveth said. Be not afraid; and yet thou, his disciple, endeavourest to renew our fears.

No, my belov'd, he return'd, far be that from me; but allow me to ask you some questions, while I closely search into the truth of so singular an event. You first saw one angel; what was his form? what his appearance? That of a young man, said Salome; but his face was radiant, and his vesture white as snow. That, cry'd the mother of Jesus, was Gabriel. Thomas then ask'd if the sun was risen, adding, You, Salome, forget that, yesterday, Pilate, at the request of the implacable priests, order'd a Roman officer, with a guard, to be plac'd at the sepulchre; now the armour, glittering in the sun, might impose on you; and, deceiv'd by fear, you might imagine you saw angelic forms.

But, Didymus, it was scarce dawn; the young man was no Roman, nor was he dress'd in armour: besides, it was his face that shone, and not his attire.

Well, what did this immortal say?

That we should not be afraid; that he knew we were seeking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was no longer there, but was risen from the dead; adding, Come in and see the place where he lay. Then, leading us into the sepulchre, he said, Go and make known to his disciples and to Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee; there

shall ye see him. Here Peter, with great emotion, exclaim'd, My name only mention'd! Ah, august messenger of the Lord! what heavenly consolation wouldst thou have afforded me in mine affliction, wert thine appearance real! But his naming me, and neither Mary nor John, fills me with perplexity.

Didymus, after a long pause, ask'd again, What did the angels say? She reply'd, Jesus goes before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him.—Were the other angels of the like form?—Their appearance was still more heavenly, cry'd two of the witnesses; but we have also seen Jesus himself.—Was he with the angels?—The angels had disappear'd when we saw him coming to meet us, cloth'd as formerly; but in his deportment there was something celestial. Such, perhaps, was his appearance on mount Tabor. All hail! said he. We instantly fell trembling at his feet, and embrac'd them. Be not afraid, continu'd he, but go and inform my brethren of these things, and that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me. At these words he disappear'd.—So you have seen him! Did all of you see him? said Thomas, with an anxious, pensive brow.—You say it was the very form, clothing, and voice of Jesus! He ceas'd; but, being carry'd away by the stream of doubts, he renew'd his discourse, and added, The illusion of what ye have been relating is now too strong upon you. When ye are able to bear it, I will plainly lay before you the several reasons which move me to differ from you: but ye, the disciples of Jesus, surely give no credit to these fables. Thus saying, he return'd to his seat. Now to the floods of joyful tears, which had issu'd from the eyes of the devout women, succeeded gentle and silent drops of pity.

Faint with joy, with pallid cheek, trembling lips, and faltering tongue, Mary Magdalen now enter'd among the weeping sisters, and, with a voice of mingled transport and terror, exclaim'd, He is risen! He is risen! She then seeming ready to faint, John took hold of her, and she stood leaning on him. Lebbeus, soon recovering from his amazement, said to her, Hast thou likewise

seen the angels? I have seen, said she, not only the angels, but himself. Here every eye was rais'd towards Heaven, except those of the incredulous Thomas, who, with austere coldness, said, They who can so far deceive themselves, as to think that they see angels, may imagine that they see him.—Ah, Didymus, answer'd Mary, blushing, what have we—what has the bless'd Jesus done to thee? These eyes saw him! at his feet they wept. James, looking at her with equal respect and astonishment, ask'd if he had a celestial lustre? He approach'd, said she, as a man, but with such sweetness and dignity in his countenance as I never saw before; no, not even in himself.

Peter, whose mind was distracted by numerous doubts, now drew near to her, and when the tumult of his mind allow'd him to give vent to his thoughts, he trembling said, Didst thou likewise hear his voice? Yes, Simon, said she, I heard the divine voice of the risen Jesus. Ah, what did he say? return'd Peter.—I feel, but am unable to express the grace which accompany'd the words he utter'd, reply'd Mary. His voice was affectionate as when, bleeding on the cross, he cry'd, Father, forgive them, they know not what they do! Ah, Mary! were the words he utter'd. I knew him! I was in Heaven! Rabboni! was all I could say. I fell down before him; with trembling hands I grasp'd his feet. Oh, what a look of kindness accompany'd his words, when he said, Hold me not! Thou shalt see me again. I have not yet ascended to my Father. Go to my brethren, and tell them, I go to my Father and your Father! to my God and your God!

The mother of Christ, who had hitherto hung down her head, now rais'd her brightening eyes, and looking with amiable softness on Mary Magdalen, arose; then, leaning on some of the assembly, walk'd up to that belov'd woman, and taking her by the hand, with a benevolent look, and the softest voice, thus address'd her: Hast thou also seen Christ, and heard his voice? Thou hast seen and heard my Son!—But may I, added she,

casting her eyes around with heavenly meekness, may I still call him my Son? Thine eyes, my dear Mary, tell me I may: but had he still the marks of the nails? Here, turning aside, she wept. Weep not, bless'd mother of the divine Jesus, said Magdalen, pressing her hand; he is risen from the dead. Indeed I did not observe the marks of the nails; for, disorder'd with my joy, I saw little but his face. Mine eyes were fix'd on the grace, the celestial grace, which shone in his countenance, while he stood before me, amidst the cool vapours of the morning, and the dawn's encreasing light. The Saviour's mother, ceasing to weep, now took Magdalen by both her hands, and look'd up to Heaven, then dropping them, stepp'd backward, and viewing her with tender admiration, said, O happy thou! thou hast seen Christ, and heard his voice!

The more early witnesses, who at first went with her, fill'd with joy, now gather'd about her, and mention'd their being favour'd first with the sight of the angels, and then of the Lord himself.

Didymus then coming up, said, Hast thou also, Mary Magdalen, seen angels? My sight of the angels, said she, was very imperfect, mine eyes being dimm'd with weeping: but, suddenly turning about, I perceiv'd somebody, whom I suppos'd to be the gardener, and whom I did not know, till he call'd me by my name.—So you scarce saw him whom you term immortal, said he; you did not immediately know him, and at first took him for the gardener? The others say he was cloth'd as he us'd to be. So then the gardener's clothes were such as he us'd to wear. And how many of these angels did you see? I saw two, she answer'd. The others, he rejoin'd, first saw one, then two others. Here, turning from her, he walk'd away. Magdalen, then raising her eyes to Heaven, exclaim'd, O thou tender mother, and ye, the disciples of the Lord, how great is his error! Leave me, Thomas, in possession of my happiness. I will hereafter answer thee. She then led away the mother of Jesus, in order to hold some joyful converse with her.

The heart of Cephas being still torn with doubts, and the affecting words, Tell it to the disciples, and to Peter, sounding perpetually in his ears, he left the assembly, and went out to indulge his melancholy thoughts, resolving to walk towards Galilee; but, restless and undetermin'd, he left the road, and went to the sepulchre. The sight of the empty tomb fill'd his mind with fresh agitations: Execrable deed! said he, to take him from this decent burial place, the gift of pious respect, and perhaps to bury him amidst villains! What unworthy treatment! Ah, infernal Malice, thou hast gain'd thy end, and Joseph's successful petition to Pilate has been frustrated! The few tears of joy, which mingled with our streams of sorrow, were shed in vain: for how can I believe that he is risen from the dead? Deceiv'd by the illusions of grief, these pious women imagine that they have seen him risen! and I have deny'd myself the transporting joy of closing with their raptures! Awful cross! added he, lifting his eyes towards that saddening object; too loudly dost thou bear witness to his death, and both Heaven and Earth have heard thy testimony! He dy'd! he dy'd on thee!—We are told that thou, my Lord, hast been seen again! O that this were true, and that I might see thee rais'd from the dead! I shall; but it will not be till I see thee on the throne of the Eternal. Why shrink'st thou back, O my soul! at this only rest? Thy prayers and tears have been heard, and thy Judge has cast a gracious eye on thy heartfelt repentance; but thou darest not yet rejoice! Still stands the cross, the dreadful witness of his death! the hill, the rock, and the sepulchre, shaken by the divine power! No, I cannot presume to hope that I shall again see my Lord!

Such was his impassion'd soliloquy, after which he again survey'd the open sepulchre. Soon he perceiv'd, at a small distance from the tomb, Magdalen, prostrate on the ground, and leaning on her right arm, Mary! Mary Magdalen! call'd the disconsolate disciple. On hearing his voice she arose, and coming to him, they thus convers'd: Ah, happy woman! dost thou still believe

that thou hast seen him!—O Simon, where thou saw'st me kneel, there he stood!—Oh Mary, lift up thine eyes and behold the cross on which he dy'd!—Yet, O Simon, he is risen!—he is risen from the dead!—Mary, I conjure thee by the living God, tell me, did those eyes which now see me standing before thee—Whether mine eyes saw him! cry'd she, interrupting him: yes, I protest, by the Eternal Source of Truth, that mine eyes have seen the glory of Christ, that mine ears have heard the voice of the Son of God, and that I felt the joys of Heaven! Here a silent pause ensu'd, till Peter said, Withdraw, thou bless'd woman, and leave me to indulge my sorrow. O that a gladdening sight had caused such a delusion in me, as it has in thee, and thus quieted my tortur'd mind! Alas! I cannot believe thee.—Then disbelieve, said she, thy having seen him walk on the sea, or thy having beheld him on mount Tabor, encircled with his Father's glory!

Here they parted. O that I could believe her! said he to himself; for she was now returning to the sepulchre. Happy, happy woman! she believes it from her whole soul, and it fills her with confidence and joy! What a composure and dignity has her fix'd certainty spread around her! unaffrighted by the grave, she would laugh at the storms which howl through the gloomy vale of death! Ah, why do I not believe her? Cannot he awake himself from death, who walk'd on the liquid sea, and even held me up amidst the boisterous waves? Yes, thou Dead in God, if thou hast really reviv'd, forgive, forgive my sorrow, and the anguish of my soul! When trembling I doubted, and was sinking before the impending wave, thou supportedst me—Oh, deliver me now! Thou knowest, O my Lord! that I have been under greater terrors than these, yet thou now extendest not thy saving right hand! Oh, by thy compassionate love, by that gracious look thou didst cast on me, after I had deny'd thee! O, by thy mercy, I implore thee, pity, pity my anguish, and if thou hast appear'd, shew thyself to me!—No, presumptuous, I ask too much. The angel's words were,

Go and tell it to the disciples and to Peter. Was not this inexpressible kindness? Thou, Lord, appear to me, who have repeatedly deny'd thee!—to me, though thou hast neither appear'd to Lebbeus, the belov'd John, nor to the tenderest of mothers!

These were his thoughts, while, with slow steps, he ascended the hill; and then sinking on his knees, he, with downcast looks, offer'd up his supplications. At length, raising his eyes, he saw Christ just before him. What amazement, what joy now pour'd into his transported soul! The divine Redeemer graciously stretch'd out his right hand, when Peter, unable to rise, strove to seize it, but fell prostrate in the dust: yet, soon rising, he stretch'd out both his arms, and, trembling, seiz'd the hand of his Lord, which he eagerly press'd to his throbbing heart, his forehead resting on his Saviour's arm. The earth and the heavens, with all the objects round him, seem'd to pass away; but soon becoming more compos'd, he lift up his eyes to the divine countenance of Jesus, and with trembling voice, strove to give vent to his unutterable joy, crying, O Lord God, merciful and gracious! Lord God, merciful and gracious! His trembling now ceas'd, and he felt superabundant and ineffable consolations flow from the divine countenance.

Ithuriel, his guardian angel, with Orion, hover'd round Calvary, and Ithuriel, breaking silence, said, O Orion, what a transporting scene! Oft shall we repeat our triumphs in honour of the Messiah! Oft joyfully exalt his name! The risen Lord shews himself to the pardon'd sinner! and Christ appears to Peter! O come and let us mingle our joy! How dreadful is sin! and yet the Redeemer fills this favour'd disciple with unutterable transports!

The risen Saviour then left the hill, and Peter follow'd him with folded hands, till he escap'd from his sight. Then extending his arms upward, he cry'd in an ecstatic transport, Thanks be to thee, the Son of God, my risen Lord! O everlasting thanks be to thee, for thou hast reliev'd my soul, and fill'd it with consolations superior to all that I could wish, or even conceive! Thus, O Lord,

wilt thou comfort me in the gloomy hour of death! O who am I?—What though I have griev'd for the dreadful sin of denying thee; yet, who am I, thou Son of God, that thou shouldst shew such grace to me? Mine eye has seen the glory of Christ! Mine eyes have seen him risen from the dead! O my soul, break forth in perpetual effusions of ardent praise! Pour forth the highest and most noble thanksgivings! I now hope for all the graces of Heaven, for the consummation of bliss, for the beatific plenitude of thy loving-kindness! Bless'd Redeemer, thou wilt unveil to me the mystery of thy death!—Not the numerous host of Heaven! Not the powers, the thrones, the archangels, can rejoice more, for I have seen the Son of the Eternal God! Him who dy'd on the cross have I seen alive! O thought, pregnant with solid bliss! Oh tell it to the eternal thrones—proclaim it through the heavens, that he lives! Ye sons of light, let this be the subject of your triumphant songs!

Here he ceas'd, and for some time stood silently looking towards Heaven; then starting, cry'd, Ye, my brethren, shall also drink of this cup of consolation, and then hasted away. Soon he reach'd Salemn's walls; soon he return'd to the assembled brethren, who were expecting him. With folded hands he enter'd, crying, Praise, glory, honour, worship and thanksgiving, be ascribed to the Son of God, who, after dying a death accompany'd with many wonders, is already risen! Even to me Christ has appear'd! He stood near the cross, and there with these eyes I saw his divine countenance!

With surprise and exultation they drew near him, and pronounc'd him bless'd. The Lord's rising to life fill'd them with an astonishment too great for utterance, and reverential silence for some moments chain'd their tongues. At length, having all gather'd round this new witness of the resurrection, they embrac'd him with overflowing joy, press'd him to their hearts and wept. The mother of the bless'd Saviour took him by the right hand, and Magdalen by the left, saying, Now, O Simon, thou hast also seen him! While Mary the mother of Jesus, added, with a heavenly smile, Thou hast seen him who

is both the Son of God and my son! Lebbeus, turning towards Mary, cry'd, O thou most respectable of all mothers, it is not now from grief, but from the ecstasy I feel, that I can scarce believe! O thou whom I saw with so many dreadful wounds, and cover'd with blood, art thou risen? art thou reviv'd? Here he sunk on the breast of John, who, embracing him, said, Yes, yes, Lebbeus, he is risen! Then, leaving Lebbeus, he address'd himself to Mary, saying, Bless'd mother of the divine Jesus, rejoice, rejoice! No more shall a sword pierce thy maternal bosom!—Oh I rejoice, said she, with celestial joy! Jesus is risen! He is risen! and to me too he will appear! Thou wilt shew thyself to me! The look thou gavest me on the cross is a pledge of this! Bartholomew, taking Peter by the hand, with compos'd countenance said, Dear fellow disciple, before my grey hairs go down to the grave, mine eyes shall likewise see our divine Master rais'd from the dead. Cephas took him by the hand, and with the cheerfulness of confident certainty, answer'd, Yes, my dear friend, to each of us will he be gracious.

Thomas, like a cloud that spreads darkness along a serene sky, now in gloomy agitations, approach'd Peter, saying, Thou too, Simon, believ'st it. Were it possible, I would believe it on thine account; and then abruptly turn'd away his sorrowful face. Turn to us, Thomas, said Peter, and join in our thanksgivings; for of a truth the Lord is risen. Yes, honour, and blessing, and praise, be to him who dy'd, who is risen from death, and has appear'd! He will be gracious to us all! At these words the mother of Christ sunk down on her knees before Peter, and spreading her joyful arms, with her eyes towards Heaven, in the voice of gladness exclaim'd, My soul doth magnify the Lord! My spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour! From thy cross thou hast look'd down on thine afflicted handmaid, on the tears of thy mother, and in thy mercy hast number'd them! Succeeding generations shall proclaim me bless'd! How wonderful is he! how great in all his doings! more mighty than death; and sacred is his name! Yes, holy and eternal is he who has

signaliz'd his mercy towards me! He casteth down the pride of the blood-thirsty, and exalteth the humble. He relieveth the distress'd; but the proud he sendeth empty away. Eternal is his loving-kindness. To those who love him, he imparts the ravishing sweets of his grace. Perpetual blessing, and praise, and honour, and thanksgiving be to Jesus, who liveth, and who is more mighty than death!

Didymus had ascended to the lofty roof, to indulge his thoughts in solitude; and the others, invited by the serene sky, the refreshing breeze, and the extensive view of the various works of God, went up to praise him who had render'd them so bless'd. On their coming to Thomas, they rouz'd him from the pensiveness in which he had been absorb'd. He at first started back, and when looking up he saw the whole assembly about him, he hastily turn'd to go down and leave them. O fly not, thou belov'd! fly not, said Peter. The Lord will also have mercy on thee. I, Thomas, doubted too; yet how gracious has he been to me! But who are they that are walking at a distance? My eyes deceive me, if they be not Matthias and Cleophas. Stay with us, my friend, and be a partaker of the ineffable joys that have been imparted to us. The same transcendent joys await thee. But who is he that is joining them from yonder grove? I do not know him. What a noble appearance has that stranger! Dost thou know him, Thomas? See with what veneration they salute him. He is now speaking. Indeed, Peter, I know him not, said Thomas; but I have scarce ever seen a man of such unaffected dignity. Peter reply'd, I wish they would come to us; the path now brings them nearer, but those palms will soon deprive us of their sight. Behold with what majestic gravity, mingled with a manly sweetness, he seems to attend to what they say. Perhaps they are giving him an account of the crucifixion of our Lord. May not it be one of the angels who was seen at the sepulchre?

How art thou mistaken! return'd Thomas. He is a man, yet his appearance is nobler than that of other men.

—O Thomas! said Peter, thou art a stranger to the sweet conjectures of joy. What thou feelest, I have experienc'd. How little did I hope to see Jesus, when in the deepest anguish, I rais'd my languid eyes to the cross, and instantly saw him standing alive before me. Thus, O Thomas! joy did not deceive me; but grief did, said Thomas, hastily.—Peter mildly answer'd, The Lord will have mercy on thee!—God will have mercy on me, he return'd; but as for the divine Messiah, he, like most of the prophets, has been put to death. Here he shed tears and was silent.

Cleophas and Matthias had now reach'd the umbrageous palms. From their leaving Jerusalem, till their being join'd by the stranger, they had convers'd on the astonishing subject of Christ's not being found in the sepulchre, and thus continu'd their discourse. Thou canst not conceive, said Cleophas, the malice of the priests, or their rage, at not being able to hinder Joseph's placing him in his tomb. They, doubtless, gain'd the Roman officer, and prevail'd on him to take out the body, and inter it among the remains of the wretches that lie buried on the hill.—But, O Cleophas! what dost thou think of the angels at the sepulchre?—Has melancholy, Matthias, deceiv'd all our friends? Why, Cleophas, should sorrow make them see angels? Why should it not rather represent frightful forms, as the ghosts of executed malefactors, or that of the unhappy Judas?

Cleophas, starting back, answer'd, My belov'd fellow disciple, satisfy me only with respect to one doubt. How is it that our Master himself does not appear? How should I know an angel? and, should I know him, how could I know that he was sent by the Eternal? Ah, my dear friend, were he risen, would he not himself appear to us? for we knew him.—But, O Cleophas, consider. Did not Mary believe Gabriel? She consequently knew an angel; and what but truth can come from those exalted spirits who attend at the throne of God? Do we deserve that he himself shall appear to us? Did not we, when Gethsemane resounded with the tumults of his out-

rageous enemies, fly with the rest of the apostles? and where were we when his dreadful sentence was pronounc'd? We were far from him, and far from him too, when he was bleeding on the cross.—I lament, like thee, Matthias, our base ingratitude. Can we ever deserve that he should ever appear to us? If he is risen, and should appear, it would be only from compassion, and to banish our sorrow. Yet still, O Cleophas! thou doubtest.—Thou knowest, Matthias, that I conceal none of my thoughts from thee; and when I attentively contemplate these things, I believe: but when the anxiety of hope, and fear, and expectation; and when the joy, the heavenly joy of seeing him again agitate my soul, then indeed I doubt. Matthias here giving him an affectionate look, said, Thou dear friend, did we really see him, our rapturous joy would give us a foretaste of the bliss of Heaven, a joy too great for utterance. A sight of Jesus would carry with it a stronger conviction than the light of truth discover'd by speculation. O that he would appear, said Cleophas, and, by his graceful presence, heal our torturing doubts!

They had now pass'd through the shade of a projecting precipice, and the winding road brought them to a side view of a gentle slope, which led up to the summit of the hill; and there they perceiv'd a person, of a noble and most graceful appearance, advancing towards them, with a slow pace, as deeply engag'd in serious thought. Let us walk slower, said Cleophas; for the stranger will perhaps accompany us. His wisdom and knowledge may afford us consolation under our present perplexity. Alas! of what advantage, said Matthias, will his wisdom be to us, if he makes not Jesus the subject of his discourse!

The stranger now coming up, gave them a kind salutation, which they respectfully return'd. He desir'd to know whither they were going; and being answer'd to Emmaus, he ask'd if they would accept of his company; for he also was going thither. They assur'd him that they should receive the favour with pleasure. The stranger

then ask'd the subject of their discourse, observing, that he had taken notice of their being fill'd with grief, and that their thoughts seem'd to be employ'd on some important subject. Alas! what can we talk of? said Cleophas. Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have come to pass there?—What things? said the stranger.—Oh, hast thou alone not heard of Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people? Our priests, inflam'd by the rage of Hell, seiz'd him and deliver'd him up to Pilate, who, though a heathen, was unwilling to condemn him. I scarcely dare to mention the dreadful death he suffer'd—they crucify'd him! Alas! we trusted that it was he who should have redeem'd Israel. It is now the third day since these things came to pass, and early this morning some devout women, who went to the sepulchre, found not his body; but came trembling to us, saying that they had seen a vision of angels, who told them that he is living. Some of those that were with us also went to the sepulchre, and found it open, and the body gone, even as the women had said.

They were now come among the shady palms, when the traveller, looking upon them with awful dignity, address'd them in the majestic voice of truth: Ye simple and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffer'd these things, and then to enter into his glory?

With astonishment they look'd at each other, and then upon him. Their eyes, before him, now sparkled with joy and eager expectation, yet he had only begun to manifest his power, and to shew them the triumph of truth. As a rising storm at first blows with restrain'd violence, and sweeps not through the whole forest, the foliage still rests on trees, and the rays of the sun penetrate through the gathering clouds. Thus began his sublime discourse, and soon he led them into the depths of revelation, in which the divine speaker explain'd the prophecies in relation to the Messiah, with such clearness and strength of conviction, that they could no longer withhold their as-

sent.—Thus through the forest rushes the increasing storm, the trees wave their heads, the thunders roar, the condens'd clouds successively pour floods on floods down the mountains.

At length the two disciples, spent with fatigue, stood wiping the sweat from their glowing faces, and said, O Man of God, though thou art unknown to us, we behold thee with reverence, and acknowledge thee to be divine. Let us stop here, and rest our weary limbs by the side of this cooling stream. They then seated themselves on the grass, the two disciples facing the heavenly stranger, whose speech now became more sweet; for he discours'd of the love of the Son of God to man, and the love of man to him. They now thought of the good Shepherd's death, with minds more compos'd, cheer'd with heavenly comfort. As after the heat of the scorching sun, the cool twilight refreshes the weary, so they were refresh'd with elevated joy. He now ask'd them whether they lov'd the Messiah? They both, as with one mouth, answer'd, How can we avoid loving him? But did you always love him? Alas! we forsook the Lamb of God, when he was led to the slaughter. Now ye know that for your sakes he willingly dy'd, would you die for his? —We hope, O thou belov'd stranger, we hope that God would enable us to die for him. But be not thou displeas'd with us; it is with reverence we speak, Is he risen from the dead? Thou know'st all that relates to him: tell us then, O thou Man of God, may we rejoice in the happiness of again seeing Christ our Lord? The stranger return'd, Joseph's brethren did not know him, till, in the blissful hour of joy, unable longer to conceal himself, he burst into tears.

So saying, he arose and turn'd from them. They follow'd him with a mixture of joy and solicitude, imagining that he might possibly be their Lord himself, or an angel; and coming up to him, said, Permit us, who reverence and love thee more than we can express, to ask, Who thou art? Oh! who art thou, our divine teacher? We dare not presume to embrace thee; but tell us, Art

thou one of the angels that were seen at the sepulchre? —Come and embrace me, he kindly return'd. They long embraced him: long hung on his neck and wept. Emmaus being now in view, he said, Brethren, I go to my friends. My way lies through Emmaus.—Oh stay with us, the day is far spent, and the evening is at hand, said they, each holding one of his hands. Let me go, he return'd; my friends live at a distance, and expect me.—With them, O Man of God! said they, thou art always; and thou canst not but perceive that our hearts are already thine. Oh remain with us, for why shouldst thou expose thyself to the perils of the night? Tell us something more of Jesus!—O stay with us.—With a look of the sweetest benevolence, he answer'd, I will stay, my brethren. Cleophas thank'd him, not in words, but by the joy which shone in his countenance, and hasted before, to prepare some food for his reception.

Cleophas, for that is my companion's name, said Matthias, has a cottage at Emmaus; before it is a clump of trees, and a limpid brook winds amidst their refreshing shade. He hastes to prepare some food, that he may cheer our hearts with his slender store. What a delightful evening is this, after such days of anguish! We return our joyful thanks, that thou wilt stay with us, and condescend to shelter thyself under the lowly roof of simplicity. Jesus, when he liv'd, was, like thee, the friend of man. He humbled himself in the dust, yet was rich in wisdom; but of Jesus I will now be silent: He was above all; for on him the angels attended; yet the cause of his poverty appear'd to be more astonishing than his poverty itself: but thus was accomplish'd the purposes of infinite wisdom. Oh that I might live with thee, thou Man of God! that from thy lips I might be taught how best to serve the heavenly Redeemer! for the most affectionate and noble thanksgivings are due to our gracious Lord, who has redeem'd us from sin, and lov'd us, even to the death of the cross!

They now drew near to the dwelling of Cleophas, whom they saw fetching water for their drink, from the

brook, and then washing herbs in the cooling stream; but seeing Matthias and the belov'd stranger approach, he ran up to them. Welcome, dear Man of God! said he, may the blessings with which thou art accompany'd, enter with thee under my roof! On their entering the house, Cleophas speedily spread the table with all the plenty his store afforded, milk, honey, figs, bread, and a little wine. They now sat down to the table, the stranger facing the two disciples, when, viewing them with a look of solemn benignity, he took the bread, and lifting up his eyes towards Heaven, gave thanks. His countenance, his voice, his gesture, instantly resembled those of Jesus. They look'd at him, they look'd at each other trembling, while he said, We thank thee, O Father, for the gifts thou hast graciously bestowed on us. Though to many they appear small, yet they are produc'd by the same paternal, almighty power that created the heavens. Overcome with joy, they sunk down adoring, while he continu'd, Praise be to thee, thou graciously sent forth the sun to give us light, and the moon and stars for our hours of rest! and ador'd be thy goodness, thou hast provided our daily bread! They now rose, and he breaking the bread, gave it to them. They took it with still stronger emotions of joy, and looking at him, endeavour'd to speak; but their hearts were too full to allow them to give utterance to their thoughts. Now again, turning his eyes towards them, he bless'd them, and disappear'd from their sight.—They started, and went out; searching for him; but, he being not to be found, they return'd with their minds still fill'd with joy.

Now, O Cleophas, cry'd Matthias, we have seen him! we have seen him!—He is risen! I am in Heaven, and no longer belong to this earth! Oh, I am in Heaven!—Cleophas sunk on his breast, then cry'd, O Matthias, did not our hearts burn within us, when, as we pass'd along the way, he spake of God, and reveal'd to us the Scriptures? But let us haste back. They then both took their staves and departed.

While they were on their way from Emmaus, Peter

and Thomas were in close conversation. Conceal, O Thomas, said Peter, conceal thy doubts, and continue not thus to disturb our faith. Quench not the weak sparks within us: they would blaze up to Heaven, and thou wouldst extinguish them. Then, Simon, answer'd Thomas, I must no more mention my thoughts; but must conceal my grief within my own breast. What good can they receive from these dreams, since they will be soon undeceiv'd, and these joyful elusions will only increase their sorrow? O brother! return'd Peter, call them not elusions: I conjure thee, by Him who liveth forever, call them not elusions—Give not that name to an act of the divine Omnipotence. Jesus was dead, and is now alive. Sacred shall be the place where I saw him. It was to me the burning bush; for there did I see the divine glory! To me it was the open gate of Heaven! Here thou art encompass'd with the witnesses, all the nine are present. We have each of us seen the divine Jesus, no longer dead, but risen.

My soul is griev'd, said Mary Magdalen, to see thy sorrow and painful doubts. O Jesus, have pity on thy distress'd apostle! He doubts not from an evil heart; but from his anxiety and anguish of soul. Oh, break not the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax! Pity him, O Rabboni, as thou hast been pleas'd to pity me! Ah, Thomas! be assur'd that not an angel from Heaven, proclaiming eternal life, nor choirs of angels, joining in ecstatic hymns, could equal the voice of the risen Jesus, when he reliev'd my panting desire to see him; when the Risen, the Awaken'd from the dead, reliev'd my longing desire to see him, and call'd me by my name.

Your intruding raptures, said Thomas, in a low and inward voice, seem to sink me deeper in the abyss of anguish in which I am involv'd. May not the vehemence with which you speak raise a mist before you? Peter taking him by the hand, with more ardent speech, return'd: The mist lies in the vehemence of thy doubts. We have seen him, and is it strange that we should be enraptur'd? Can we be in Heaven and not feel its trans-

ports? Thou hast not seen, and therefore thou form'st to thyself the images of graves and night, and with more positiveness talk'st thou of these, than we of our risen Master, whom we have seen and heard, and whose body our hands have felt. He made himself known to us with his usual compassion and loving-kindness, to which thou art no stranger. If thou art incapable of conviction, return back to the Sadducees, and believe with them, that there are neither angels, nor spirits, nor the resurrection of the dead.

Here Thomas could no longer refrain from tears, and turning to Peter, said, Ah, be not so cruel! Like thee I love the divine Jesus, our dear crucify'd Lord! Endeavour to assuage thy grief! said Salome: O Didymus! is not he, whom thou call'st our crucify'd Lord, able to remove thine incredulity, and to restore thy peace? he to whom immortality, and the life of angels, to which he is risen, bear witness?—Yes, the life of angels, said all the female witnesses. His immortality was manifest, though he had laid aside the lustre which beam'd in Gabriel, and irradiated the angels who proclaim'd his birth.

Has the Lord appear'd to all but me? said Thomas. No, he has not appear'd even to his disconsolate mother. Not to her son John. Not to him whom, when expiring on the cross, he recommended to his mother, as an affectionate son! Not to her whom, at the same awful moment, he recommended to that son, as a mother!

Thus they convers'd, while the hearers were toss'd amidst strong fluctuations of saddening doubt, and exulting faith. When Peter, Mary Magdalen, and the other women spoke, they walk'd on the sea; but, at the objections of Didymus, sank in the overwhelming waves.

The doubting apostle here withdrew, and leaving Jerusalem, retir'd among Olivet's most lonely tombs, to indulge his melancholy, or rather, in the midst of Solitude's silent retreat, to strive to allay the anguish of his mind. In Solitude's right hand is a goblet, her left hand holds a threatening dagger. To the happy she

presents the cup, and urges the wretches to use the steel. Thomas, now within the gloom of a lonely sepulchre, felt the load of his griefs become more heavy, and more dark his thoughts. His soul labour'd to rise above his grief; but vain were his efforts, and had he not had recourse to the Almighty, who gives rest to the weary soul, he would have sunk under his burthen. O thou Unsearchable, said he, how dark are the depths of thy counsels! Yet to thee alone can I have recourse in the midst of my sorrows! Oh look down on me, a wretched worm, writhing itself in midnight darkness! Thou knowest, O Jehovah! my love to him who so lately bled on the cross! O Father! in the overflowings of thy mercy, and in the fulness of thy grace, didst thou send him! Yet thou hast permitted him to die—to die the death of the cross! Alas, he is dead!—more dead to me than to his other disciples! O thou Omnipotent Father! where loiter'd thy thunder? where slumber'd thy tempest, when the lofty cross was rais'd? The earth then shook with horror! the aërial expanse resounded, and the minds of men were struck with terror! Yet then was he put to death, and no rock crush'd, no chasm swallow'd his murderers! O thou Father Almighty! who, by a ministring angel, slew the first-born of Egypt, yet pass'd over those dwellings in Ramesis that were sprinkled with blood! Thou who divided the sea, and suspended the river's course, to open a passage for Israel! Thou who, being with thy Holy Son Jesus, enabled him to calm the rage of tempests; to walk on the boisterous waves; to open the eyes of the blind, that they might see the glories of thy creation: to make the cripple leap with joy, and even to raise the dead to life! O thou God of mercy and grace, where is thy Son? Wilt thou—will he awaken me from this death of affliction, and from these doubts? Ah! my dear Lord lies mouldering in the dust, and thou, O God, keepest silence! O Thou whose ways are inscrutable, all thy floods pass over my soul!

Thus he utter'd his supplications and complaints, then in silence wrung his clasp'd hands. At length resuming,

he cry'd, Ah, were I to sleep in one of these sepulchres, he would not awake me, as he did Lazarus and Semida! But why should I return to a life in which I cannot find him? Ye happy dead who sleep here, is Jesus known to you? If he is, happy are ye! If ye knew and lov'd him, ah, ye are now with him! Ye dry'd bones that are here mouldering into dust, shall at the voice of God awake, and in that glorious day thou, my Lord, shalt also awake, and I with thee, re-animated with the breath of life! Happy, ye other friends of the crucify'd Jesus! May ye still enjoy your happiness! Ye fancy him risen, and though it is a visionary delusion, rejoice in it no less than if it were a reality. Blissful vision, like that which fill'd Jacob's oppress'd mind: not, indeed, like his, real, but filling you with joy and praise. O thou that madest the eye, and seest the grief of my oppress'd heart, it is not thy will that I should rejoice with them. Ah, could I but see him, what would be life to the transport I should then feel! With an impetuous shout of joy would I call to him, then gladly sink in silence and death! O my Lord! if thou hast appear'd, appear to me! What a request! Reject, O my soul, the illusive idea!—Yet the renewal of life is in his power. He could, if he pleased, come forth from the shades of death! But how would he be pleas'd to do this? How be pleas'd to die—only for a few hours? Had he chose to live, he would have come down in triumph from the cross! O Jesus, wert thou now living, wouldst thou not appear to me? for who languishes like me for conviction? How delightfully are my friends deceiv'd! I pity their too easy credulity; but, O my Lord, when I see thee, when I put my finger into thy wounds, and my trembling hand into thy side, I also will believe! then will I joyfully grasp thy feet. But alas! I shall never believe! Never shall I put my finger into the wounds of thy hands! never put my hand into thy side! never grasp thy feet! for thou art dead! thou hast already had a second grave! O thou Father of the bless'd Jesus! do not utterly forsake me.

Thus, in loud and broken sentences, he gave vent to the thoughts of his agitated mind, supporting himself by leaning on the fragment of a rock which had fallen from the sepulchre, when the veil of the temple was rent. The mourning disciple was still leaning on the rock, when the silence of the night was broke by the voice of one gradually approaching, who call'd, What doleful lamentation proceeds from the sepulchres? Art thou wounded? Can I, O stranger, help thee? Didymus continu'd silent, and the voice added, Tell me who thou art? for hearing the voice of thine anguish, I am coming to relieve thee. I heard thy complaints far in the valley, and if man can give thee succour, I will. I rejoice, O stranger, said Thomas, that thou hast a humane heart; may the blessing of God be with thee! but go whither thy nightly way calls thee. A fond wife and tender children, perhaps, wait thy coming. Thou canst not help me: for the wounds, of which I complain, are those of the soul. Wounds of thy soul, brother! answer'd the voice, which now approach'd nearer; stretch forth thine arm, that I may find and embrace thee. Didymus stretch'd out his arm, and the other seizing it, embrac'd it. Thomas then began the discourse.

Art thou, O traveller! an Israelite! Didst thou come to Jerusalem at the late festival? What is thy name?—I am one of the sons of Jacob. I come from a far country, and my name is Joseph: what, brother, is thine?—My name is Thomas.—But why, O Thomas, dost thou vent thy lamentations here at the sepulchres in the gloom of night? Come, let us leave this dreary place: silence and darkness only blacken the melancholy images which overcloud thy soul.

This silence, O Joseph! these melancholy images which overcloud my soul, I am pleas'd with. I now love nothing more than death and the grave. If the earth would receive me into its peaceful bed, I should no longer be the son of misery, no longer lie in the depths of affliction.

O Thomas, my brother, raise thy head from the dust,

look up to Heaven, and learn to complain with fear and trembling! As we should rejoice with fear, so should we complain. Who is he that has permitted misery? Is it not he who has form'd us for eternal life? Ought thy vehement complaints to reach the ears of the Most High, mingled with the joyful effusions of the adoring choirs, and their rapturous hallelujahs? Cannot God deliver? Learn, with fear I repeat it, learn with trembling to mourn. When he, who is worthy of all praise, sends affliction, reverence, my brother, the heavenly messenger.

O Joseph! thou art a man after my own heart. While speaking of the Eternal, thy soul becomes inflam'd. Thou hast felt holy joy, and hast been bless'd with sorrow; but never felt sorrow like mine. Alas! if thou hadst, thou wouldst have sunk under it like me! Speak then, O Thomas! and mention the burthen which presses thee down.—Yes, Joseph, it indeed presses me down. But where shall I begin? Oh, didst thou know the divine Jesus? How long hast thou dwelt in Judea?—Only a few days. But messengers were continually coming from Judea to the abodes of joy, where I dwell, and have spoke much of Jesus, the Son of the Most High. At last we came down to see Jesus die and rise from the dead.—Rise from the dead! Who art thou, Joseph? Who art thou?—Ah, Thomas, I had a faithful friend in Judea, from whom I was long separated. He left me in Egypt, and him God was pleas'd to restore to me, not, thou disciple, in the terrors of an earthquake, the darkness and tempest, but coming from Cedron, amidst the whispers of the cooling breeze; thus he restor'd to me my ever faithful, long lost, but everlasting friend. I must now leave thee, brother, but will come back and see thee again.

O Joseph, stay! Where art thou, O Joseph? Where art thou? Have angels the sweet name of him who was the belov'd of his father, and of God? Let me once more, O Joseph! hear the sound of thy celestial voice. But thou art silent. May I call thee brother, as thou

calledst me? Thou art still silent. Where goest thou? Art thou void of pity, or gone so far as not to hear me? He is no angel; for no angel could ever be so cruel!—But he lives in the abodes of joy!—The messengers from Judea speak of the divine Jesus!—Who were the messengers from Judea? Were they sent from God?—Certainly God can send angels from Judea to Heaven. He came down, that is from Heaven, to see Jesus die! So the messengers from Judea knew before what was to happen. And rise from the dead! But surely this could not be. What could he mean? He call'd me disciple! Then Jesus came from Cedron, not in an earthquake, but in a gentle breeze, to restore to him a dear friend. But when? Before he dy'd? Why then in a gentle breeze? Yes, there was a soft breeze, that smooth'd the sea. The earthquake was after his death. Did he then, after his death, restore to him his long lost and now eternal friend, and thus, while dead, perform that benevolent miracle?—But why dead? Did not Joseph see him risen? How mysterious!—The farther I search, the more am I perplex'd.—But was I awake? Perhaps, while spent with sorrow and perturbation of soul, after having rested on the rock, I sunk down and fell asleep, and have only seen this stranger in a dream. It must be so. He was all benevolence; but suddenly fled. Thus do dreams; but never a friend, whether he be a man or an angel. Now I know, by experience, the effects of fix'd grief; and thus the others have deceiv'd themselves with their seeing apparitions. Happy illusions, which have had such effects on them! I will now, however, resign myself to the will of the Almighty, and go in the way which he directs. Thus he resolv'd, and listening to hear the murmuring sound of Cedron's stream, as a guide to direct his steps, return'd, resolving to rest at Gethsemane.

Thomas had not long left the assembly when they were alarm'd with some hasty raps at the door, on which James hasted down, and found Matthias and Cleophas, whom he joyfully let in. They were out of breath and

fatigu'd with their haste. When they were a little recover'd, James introduc'd them into the assembly. The mother of Jesus, Magdalen, and several others, hastily gather'd round them, and, with eyes beaming joy, cry'd, The Lord is risen, and has appear'd to Peter. Cleophas, raising his hands and voice towards Heaven, exclaim'd, How blest are we! He is risen! He is risen! We also are witnesses of his resurrection. To us Christ has likewise appear'd. Peter then hastily approach'd them, on which Cleophas continu'd, O brother in Christ, and my brother, he call'd us Brethren! Peter answer'd, All about you, except Mary, have seen him appear since his death: but thee, his mother, he will likewise gratify by his appearance. The first who saw him was Magdalen, and she was alone: he next shew'd himself to the nine, and appear'd to me. No words can express the raptures with which our hearts were agitated. But behold, some of our brethren mourn, while we rejoice. They were dispos'd to credit us, when Thomas, who is miserable himself, perplex'd them: they were beginning to taste of our joy, when he drove it from them. Lord, have pity on them! Have pity on the unhappy Thomas!

John, now coming up to them, said, I am not at all perplex'd by the objections of Didymus, and am only griev'd that Jesus has not appear'd to me. Why, my dear John, return'd Peter, he has not yet appear'd to Mary, his and thy mother. But, brethren, relate in what manner he appear'd to you.

Being fill'd with grief, said Cleophas, we resolv'd to walk to Emmaus, that we might find some alleviation to our sorrow, by conversing in the open air, and enjoying a view of the country. In the way we were join'd by a stranger, for whom, at first sight, we conceiv'd an extraordinary affection, which increas'd as he spake. He explain'd to us the books of the prophets, shew'd us that the Messiah was to suffer, and the manner of his sufferings. All he said to us I know, without being at present able to relate it. Never man spake as he spake. His speech was fill'd with strength and fervour. We had

now reach'd Emmaus. We entreated him to stay with us, and at length he consented. I hasted to set water and provisions on the table. He then—Methinks I now see him hold the bread, and hear him beg a blessing. He had then the real voice of Jesus, and the same divine countenance. He brake the bread, and gave to each; then, once more looking kindly on us, disappear'd. We sought him, but finding it in vain, without farther delay hasted back to bring you the joyful tidings.

Lebbeus, whose faith Thomas had most shaken, sat with down-cast eyes; and though on other occasions he was susceptible of the tenderest impressions, had listen'd to the joyful relation with critical coldness; and now gave vent to his thoughts. I believe you, brethren, said he. Yes, I allow that some man of eminent wisdom, or perhaps an angel, join'd you in your walk to Emmaus. If you and the women have seen angels, the Lord in his mercy sent them, to comfort us under our grief for the Messiah's death: a sad addition to which is, his corpse being taken away. In pity to our anguish, he sends us angels as convincing evidences that the soul of Jesus is in the bosom of eternal repose. Thus am I far from denying that he who convers'd with you, was sent by God to comfort you. He saw farther into the depths of the divine wisdom than we, and was better able to explain what is foretold by the prophets. But that Jesus at last appear'd in his own person, when before he was unknown, I cannot believe: for, if it was he, how was it possible for you not to know him at first? Ye were certainly deceived by your joy. While the stranger held the bread, he stood in the graceful attitude of Jesus, who, when at our meals, us'd to hold up the bread towards Heaven, offering up his thanksgivings. After being thus deceiv'd, you might easily imagine that you heard the voice of Jesus, when the worthy stranger offer'd up his petitions.

At Lebbeus's words, trouble and gloomy doubt flow'd into the souls of those who were fill'd with joy and wonder. Cleophas gave him a look of commiseration, and Matthias, embracing him, said, O thou disciple of the

risen Jesus, before we knew him, we ask'd if Jesus was really rais'd from the dead, and whether we might hope for the happiness of seeing him again: on which he said, Joseph's brethren did not know him, till in the blissful hour of joy, he burst into tears. O Jesus! wert thou living, said Lebbeus, covering his face, thou wouldst not withstand our entreaties. Peter observ'd him without concern; for he was now incapable of grief, and sedately said, As ye left the hanging rock, we saw you from the roof. Was it there, as ye pass'd near the palms, that Jesus join'd you? Yes, said they, we had scarce pass'd the rock when we were join'd by the divine Jesus. Here Peter, transported with joy, exclaim'd, My dear brethren, ye have all seen the risen Jesus! Do you hear the witnesses? Already have ye seen Jesus! Thomas too has seen him! O that he were here! Here the mother of Jesus, with joyful amazement, cry'd, I too have seen my Son alive —alive after his death!

As a lonely survivor, just depriv'd by death of his last friend, half waking amidst melancholy dreams, in which he sees the dear person alive, but finds himself unable to touch him, continues to seek the illusive image, while his impassion'd heart beats strong, and joy thrills through his bones; such was the state of the tearful assembly.

But the seraphims, the fathers, and the rejoicing angels now hasted to them. Simon Peter, affectionately looking on the assembly, perceiv'd an unusual lustre around them. His transport check'd a rising tear, and in a silent aspiration he said, O thou who art unsearchable, yet ever gracious, wilt now have pity on them.

Peter was continuing his silent devotions, when the adorable Messiah enter'd the assembly. Struck with astonishment, they all stood as motionless as a rock, with their eyes fix'd on him. Peace be with you! said the risen Jesus. They saw him, scarce believing that he was present, and stood gazing on him in silence. Involv'd in torrents of various thoughts, they sunk in that sea of light, in which the immortals themselves sink, and unable to unravel their confus'd conceptions, imagin'd that

they saw an angel. With the voice of love, with his own endearing voice, he then cry'd, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold, my belov'd, my hands and my feet; angels have neither flesh nor bones, as ye see I have.

Here they all trembled. Mary sunk down before him, held the feet of her risen Son, and saw in them the marks of his wounds. She then look'd up to his face, and while she gaz'd upon it, her own became like that of an angel. Here, mother, said Jesus, pointing to the mark of the wound, from which had issu'd water and blood, after death had stopp'd its vital course: here likewise was I pierc'd. Again an angelic lustre beam'd from the mother's face. Many now kneel'd about him, look'd at the marks of his wounds, and stretch'd out their arms towards him; and to the risen Jesus was utter'd jubilant strains and broken accents, which drew a tear from the eyes of him they ador'd. The affectionate John long held his right hand, long with joyful eyes look'd up in his face, desirous of expressing his deep-felt hearty thanks, and petitions; but did it not! He began, but stopp'd and was silent. Then the great Emanuel, addressing him, said, Thou stood'st by the cross till I expir'd: But where is Lebbeus? Lebbeus had lain prostrate on the floor, kissing the border of the Redeemer's garment; but at his calling him by name he arose, and with a countenance pale as death, from his overpowering joy, presented himself before his Lord, who, holding out his right hand, said, Lebbeus, here is my hand; when, the disciple holding out his trembling hand, it sunk down. The merciful Saviour, then stooping, took hold of his hand, and long affectionately held it. The joy-oppress'd disciple, now with a firm voice, cry'd, Of thy grace, O Lord, there is no end! Simon the Canaanite, and James the son of Alpheus, embrac'd each other, rejoicing in the Lord; then look'd at one another, and at the Holy Jesus. The whole assembly alternately view'd their Lord and each other, joining in one general joy, that he had blessed them with his presence.

Now began a second hymn of triumph to the risen Saviour, form'd of broken sentences, and the soft voice of joyful weeping. Around him kneel'd the more early witnesses, Peter, Matthias, Cleophas, and the favour'd women, whose noble souls follow'd the suffering Jesus, till he expir'd on the cross. Among them stood the Conqueror of Death, with his eyes lift up, and his extended arms rais'd towards Heaven. Though the fulness of his glorification did not yet beam forth, yet his graceful aspect appear'd more divine than they had ever seen, and no longer could they keep their fix'd eyes on his face. James cast his down to the floor, and with suppliant voice, cry'd, O Lord—Lord, do not yet ascend to thy Father! O here—I shall still, said Jesus, remain with you, my children. A flood of the most rapturous joy now pour'd into their souls. They scarcely knew what they thought or said. O, is it possible—Ye angels, is it possible that it can be Jesus himself? cry'd one. A second exclaim'd, Are we in Heaven, or still on earth?—It is Jesus himself!—Ah! art thou he, whose blood was shed on Golgotha? Do we now behold thee, our gracious Lord, or are we deceiv'd by pleasing rapturous visions?

At this instant Jesus turn'd, and walking up to the table, said, Have ye here any meat? They all arose, and hasted to bring him food, when John, eagerly pressing through the others, set before him a piece of an honeycomb and some broil'd fish. and then, with awful silence, drew back. The Saviour then, with mild condescension, looking at the whole assembly, said, Come near, my disciples. Ye, my belov'd, draw near, and place yourselves at the table. Come thou, my mother, and seat thyself by thy son.—She came, as did the others. He ate. The sight of his condescending love in suffering them to sit at the same table with himself, while he ate with them, at once allay'd the ebullitions of their transports. More tranquil joys, and a more settled faith now taking possession of their more compos'd minds, the Redeemer thus address'd them:—Ye believ'd not the

witnesses who told you that I liv'd, though they had seen me when rais'd from the dead. Oh, why did ye not believe their report? How stubborn, my belov'd, were your souls! Did I not tell you that I was to be crucify'd, and to rise on the third day? and that all things must be fulfill'd which were written in the law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me? My future witnesses, beginning at Jerusalem, shall preach to all nations, repentance and remission of sins in my name. Ye, my brethrén, are those witnesses, and behold I send the promise of my Father, and ye shall make me known throughout the earth. Remain ye near Jerusalem till I ascend to my Father, and till ye are endu'd with power from on High. Then go and preach to all nations, declaring that whoever believeth and is baptiz'd, shall be sav'd; but he that believeth not, shall be condemn'd. Many believers shall work miracles; in my name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues; shall take up serpents, and drink the most deadly potion without being hurt: they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall be heal'd.

The Mediator then rising with a smile of complacency, stepp'd from the table, and the assembly joyfully thronging about him, he said, Come near, my apostles. At this the others drew back, not through envy, for they rejoiced at the superior bliss of the more highly favour'd, as the just, made perfect, rejoice in Heaven at the superior bliss of those whom Jesus has first chosen. Around the Saviour stood the apostles, who were to lay down their lives for the truth: he in spirit saw them bleed, and overflowing with cordial love, said, Peace be unto you. Then, as from a soul surcharged with joy, he breathed upon them, saying, Receive the Holy Ghost. Soon shall ye receive him more abundantly. Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted, and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retain'd.

With astonishment and submission they heard the great decree. Now, thinking that Jesus was about to leave them, they gather'd round him, yet dar'd not re-

quest his longer stay; but their looks and gestures strongly express'd their emotions. Peter, wrap'd up in thoughts, which like a flame spread through his soul, cast himself at the feet of Jesus, then grasping and kissing them, cry'd, Lord, on earth I cannot express my thanks, in Heaven I will. I know I shall. It was said, Tell it to the disciples and to Peter! Thou also appear'st to me! To me dost thou appear! I know, O thou Most Merciful! thou Redeemer from sin! thou, my Deliverer, and the Deliverer of all Adam's fallen race! that thou hast forgiven my base denial of thee! But, O my gracious Saviour! permit me once more to acknowledge thee —to acknowledge thee, my Lord, before thy face, to lament my guilt, and before I go to those whom thou hast reconcil'd, and in thy name to forgive sinners, to hear the voice of thy forgiving goodness, and thy divine mouth pronounce my pardon, with the ravishing assurance that thou wilt receive me into eternal life.

These words he utter'd with devout reverence, and with his eyes fix'd on the countenance of the merciful Redeemer, who return'd this gracious answer:—Know, Simon, that I have pray'd to my Father for thee, that thy faith fail not, and my Father has heard me. Rise, Simon, thy sins are forgiven thee. Thus spake the divine Redeemer, with a voice that pierc'd through the bones and marrow to the inmost soul. He then vanish'd from their sight. Peter, transported with this favour, cry'd, Lord, we follow thee into Galilee. The angel of the sepulchre then said, Ye shall once more see the Lord at Jerusalem, when he will inform you at what time ye shall see him in Galilee. The angel thus vanish'd, his effulgence slowly disappearing.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XV.

The Argument.

Several of those who had been rais'd from the dead appear: particularly to Nephthoa, one of the children whom Christ had plac'd before the people: to Dilean: to Tabitha, whom Peter restor'd to life: to Cidli: to Stephen: to Barnabas, the son of Joses: to Portia: to Beor, blind from his birth, and brought to his sight by Jesus. Abraham and Moses would appear to Saul; but it is forbidden by Gabriel. Some of those raised from the dead also appear to Samma, Joel, and Elkanan, Simeon's brother, and to Boaz: to Mary, the mother of Jesus: to Cidli, Jarius's daughter, and to Semida, the young man of Nain.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XV.

COME thou who oft hast fill'd my soul with tranquil melancholy, and cheer'd it with views of its grand expectations! Come contemplation of the future world! For when the events I sing were perform'd, the future world was on earth: the dead appearing to the first Christians, calling them to Heaven, and consecrating them for eternal life.

Small was now the holy society; but from its root rose a tree, whose branches spread throughout the heavens: the hundred and forty thousand redeem'd; the host without number on the sea of crystal; the hundred and forty-four thousand who sang a new song, which no one could learn. These will be redeem'd from among men, and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Behold a Host without number, composed of kindreds, tongues and nations, assembled round the throne in white robes, and, with palms in their hands, crying, with the voice of joy, Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb! Then the angels and the elders shall fall on their faces, the sea shall roar, and the conquerors wave their palms; for after great tribulation, they shall arrive in Heaven, having wash'd their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The smaller band, the root of the tree, had not yet been call'd. They still slept under the veil of the law; but for the first time will awake, as if risen from the dead; and then shall Cephas, in one discourse, add to

the community three thousand persons. Still slumber'd even those who were to be the first fruits, and still unknown to them was the new everlasting hymn of joy.

Behold the work of the risen begins. From Tabor the glorify'd just descend, to appear to the future Christians. Before the shining troop came down to Salem, they gather'd round the father of men, who thus address'd them: Rejoice, my children! Now is arriv'd the hour of salvation, in which ye shall begin to thirst for the stream of life.

Religion had penetrated the soul of the happy child whom Jesus had placed before his hearers, and dismiss'd with a blessing. Nephthoa, no longer fond of his childish sports, was in love with solitude, which was become the joy of his early years. Endu'd with understanding, and fill'd with divine grace, he bore blossoms and fruit in the very dawn of life. Seven years had pass'd without fruit, and then he long'd for those precious seeds that are unknown to those who are fond of trifling amusements, and began to sow for the glorious harvest of the resurrection. Kneeling in a secret corner of the house, he thus offer'd up his evening devotions: O Lord! thou certainly hearest me, though I do not always find that I am heard. Before thy bright throne, O Father! kneel all the children of Heaven and of Earth. We on earth, whose portion is tears, kneel in the dust. They whose tears thou hast wip'd away, kneel on shining clouds; these, and the angels who never wept, supplicate thee for an increase of bliss: but sweet are the requests of those above, for they are fill'd with joy. Our prayers are mix'd with tears, while we petition thee for deliverance from sin and misery, and for the blessings of the life eternal. These petitions will be granted; for this thy great Prophet proclaim'd, when, in the happiest hour of my life, he plac'd me before the people. The blessings of this life pass away like the withering flower: may I have heavenly blessings bestow'd by him who was sent not only to heal the sick, but to heal the sinner. Ah! I do not yet know him as the Guide to eternal life:

I know not yet how he will lead me in the way of my duty; yet on thee, O my God, will I rely! Thy will, not mine, be done. This poor, short, and fleeting life is like a flower which blows but to fade, and is no sooner faded than it is bury'd in the dust, and hid from the sight. Thus it will be with me. How I long to obtain knowledge and joy! Let me obtain them, and, O my God! I will wait thy time for my withering, till I sink down, and thus become transplanted into the land of light and repose. Here is no knowledge, no perfect deliverance from the gloom of that ignorance which surrounds us; but I shall be remov'd to the place where truth shines in all its brightness. Of innumerable things I am now ignorant, and shall still be so, when my soul, borne on the wings of mature years, shall take a nobler flight. Yet, O my soul! return to thy rest; for he who has created thee with this thirst after a clear knowledge of himself, will certainly gratify it. Should'st thou who hast fill'd my soul with thoughts of a future life, permit me to return to my playful companions, I should lose this thirst for divine knowledge, and be again in the same state as that from which Jesus call'd me, when he set me before the people and bless'd me.

Thus pray'd Nephthoa, while his angel, hovering round him. heard his petitions, and wrote them in characters of flame in his book; a book of life, in which was written the petitions acceptable to the infinite Giver of all grace. While the immortal's hand was flying along the glittering scroll, Benoni came, and drew near to the suppliant and the writer. Wilt thou, Benoni, appear to him? said the enraptur'd angel, handing him the book. The newly-risen read, and being unable to restrain his joy, embrac'd the exulting seraph, who cry'd, May his petitions be granted! An answer will instantly descend from the eternal throne.

Benoni drew nearer to Nephthoa, who was still kneeling, and now began this second prayer. With joyful heart do I praise thee, O Father! for the favours thou hast bestow'd upon me. How hast thou overshadow'd

me with thy goodness! Thou it was, O eternal Father! the Father of all the children of Heaven, and of all on Earth, who sent'st the greatest of thy prophets to bless me! Where shall I, O Lord of Glory, to whom I lift my tearful eyes!—where shall I begin, where conclude thy praise? Even the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast taught to praise thee: therefore will I not be silent; for the mouths of children hast thou prepar'd to give thee praise!

Benoni at first resolv'd to appear before him as one of the boys that came to the festival; but seeing the tears of joy and gratitude shed by one so young, he could not suit the character, and therefore stood before Nephthoa in his glorify'd form, array'd in a vernal cloud. Nephthoa was not afraid; for oft had he seen celestial forms present themselves to him in visions and light slumbers; he therefore said, with quick voice, Tell me, O celestial youth! has the prophet sent thee to me? Thou art a messenger of peace, blessing, and joy; speak, sing it on thy glittering harp, and tell me why thou art come! Relate to me, thou son of light, divine things, and tell me of my relations who have dy'd, for thou art partaker of their felicity! Tell me of my sister, sweet innocence! who dy'd among the sweet breathing roses, herself a lovely flower! Hast thou no salutations from Dimna Kedemoth? What did she say to thee? Perhaps it was, Blessed be the Lord that I am here, and that my dear Nephthoa will also die, and come to me! Pardon my presumption, thou glorify'd inhabitant of Heaven, in daring to speak so long to thee! Ah, divine messenger! thou art silent.

My silence, said Benoni, is owing to my seeing thee, and my raptures at thy felicity. The Lord hast sent me to thee. Jesus was dead, but is already risen from the grave, and will soon ascend to glory! Then will his apostles bear witness in Jerusalem of his death, his resurrection and ascension. To them attend. They will open to thee divine things, as far as it is given mortals to know. May thy sister one day receive thee in the

fragrant shade of the tree of life!—Nephthoa, I must now leave thee.

O not yet, thou inhabitant of Heaven! said Nephthoa. Turn not away so soon thy radiant eyes, thy rosy blush, thy gladdening smile. But Benoni disappear'd, while Nephthoa stood as entranc'd, with outstretch'd arms, to embrace his celestial friend, cloth'd in light: but his empty arms strove to hold a fleeting shadow. He then looking up to Heaven pray'd. He was now less alone than he imagin'd, for neither his angel, nor the unseen Benoni had left him. They still with complacency heard him offering his tribute of praise to his gracious Creator, fervently thanking him for this favour, and for the hopes he had receiv'd of obtaining divine knowledge.

Dilean had lost his only friend. To him was the prophet of God known, and long had he wander'd about Jerusalem, inquiring whether Jesus was risen, or was still dead. His head was now wrap'd in night, and floods of inquietude enter'd his soul. He sought repose, and found it not, in a country that appear'd as luxuriant as the spring. As it was late, he retir'd among the sepulchres on the mount of Olives, and, misleading Darkness being his guide, he walk'd among them with watchful eye and ear. Do those murmurs, said he, proceed from the brook of Cedron? Does that rustling proceed from the palms of Gethsemane? No; the noise is in one of the sepulchres. He now perceiv'd a glimmering light, which the wind had almost extinguish'd, and going up to it, came to a sepulchre, out of which were carrying the bones; for a rich man had bought the tomb of a poor one, whose ancestors were to be remov'd. Dilean stood at the entrance, and saw them with painful steps come out and return with like tedious slowness, loaded with bags of bones. Happy are those ye carry! said he. Give me the torch, and I will light you. They gave him one, on which, entering the sepulchre, he held it in his hand, and leaning against the rock, thus indulg'd his thoughts: Ye happy, happy dead!—They who have for-

saken me are now like you. When their burial clothes are grown old like these, I shall be like them! But now —I, forsaken, have lost the great Prophet of God, my happiness here—and my future happiness!—Jesus has fallen by the rage of the wicked; but does not the Almighty give eternal felicity to the just, and provide that the best of mankind shall not forever be a prey to the worst? Am I eternal? Is this body to moulder in the dust?—Is Jesus risen from the dead? Is his body turning to corruption? Awful questions, not to be solv'd. Where are ye, his departed associates? Do ye dwell in the mansions of light and joy?

The sepulchre was now clear'd of its mortal remains, which was scarce perceiv'd by the pensive Dilean, till he was struck by the deep silence. I am now alone, continu'd he; but ye spirits that animated these bodies, where are ye? Elisha's bones awak'd the dead—the soul must then have been with the body; for dust cannot impart life. If but one soul be here, oh let it come, and inform me of my future lot! Come, thou soul, I shall not be terrify'd at thine appearance. Come, I conjure thee, by thy last sigh, when struggling with death!—by thy hope of immortality, or thy dread of falling into nought! Thus he call'd, looking into the sepulchre.

Thirza, the mother of the seven martyrs, with the souls of Dilean's friends, and that of his dear spouse, were already there. These had conducted him through the vale of the sepulchres to the rock, by which he now stood. May I venture to appear to him? said his once faithful wife; perhaps he would be affrighted at the sight of me. I will appear before him, answer'd Thirza.

Dilean, having no hopes of seeing what he so passionately desir'd, endeavour'd to forget his anxiety in sleep; but sought in vain the refreshment of a short balmy repose, and sadness again invaded his heart. You, my friends, said he, I have lost, and thou, the dear companion of my life, hast left me. I alone remain in this tumultuous world.—Ah! what's there? Who art thou that approaches me? added he, moving up to the sha-

dowy form. Thirza suddenly became invested with the appearance of an immortal. He trembled; but instantly recovering himself, view'd the radiant figure, crying, Tell me, phantom, art thou an intellectual being, or an inflam'd vapour of night? Perhaps thou art only a visionary creature of my own distemper'd brain. Thirza now gave him the sweetest smile, and animated her eyes with such spirit, as banish'd every idea of an imaginary being. With the hasty voice of impatient wonder, he cry'd, Thou bright appearance, speak! Who art thou?

Who I am, said she, thou shalt know hereafter. But, happy man, think not thyself more perfect than others, from thy being favour'd with my appearance. The man born blind to whom Jesus gave sight, was long involv'd in darkness, that he might become a witness of the glory of the Lord, and that thou may'st bear witness of the resurrection of Jesus, he has sent me. I appear, not because thou calledst, for I should have appear'd hadst thou been silent. Thy doubts, indeed, deserve forgiveness; but not a reward. The whole race of mortal sinners may have their doubts in relation to the world to come; but they will know by experience, that life dwells beyond the grave.

Dilean, who stood pale and trembling before the resplendent form, answer'd, I presume not to ask thee any farther questions; but, O radiant being! I will bow myself in the dust before him who has sent thee. Then, turning aside from Thirza, he kneel'd, and, lifting up his eyes, said, O Lord of Glory, forgive my doubts! forgive my fears! To thee my fears are known, though they should not be understood by the bright messenger thou hast graciously sent. O Lord! enable me to obtain the bliss pointed out to me by thy celestial messenger; then, with joy and triumph, shall I, on my leaving this house of clay, ascend to thee, and to my friends in Heaven.

He now arose, and before him still stood the immortal, who, in melodious accents, thus address'd him: Behold, as thou avoidest to ask, I will answer thee. I am Thirza,

the mother of the seven martyr'd sons. By this rock is the happy soul of thy belov'd, and some of the friends, whom living thou knewest, and they will expect thee in the regions of joy. Know that, before the Messiah's ascension to his heavenly throne, he will shew himself in Galilee to five hundred brethren at once, and there shalt thou see him.

Here the exalted Thirza, soaring upward, disappear'd. With tears of joy, Dilean left the sepulchres; but first pour'd forth his thanks to the Fountain of eternal light, from whom he had receiv'd a foretaste of Heaven, and such comfort and joy, as no man could bestow.

On a carpet of Tyrian purple sat the inventive Tabitha, her imitating hand employ'd in silken embroidery of various colours. The subject was the monument of Benjamin's mother, a flower early blighted. On the tomb rested Rachel; by her kneel'd Benjamin, who, with averted eyes, plung'd a dagger in her heart; and the fainting Rachel was supported by Tabitha. While the fair embroiderer was thus employ'd, an unknown person, dress'd in a funeral garb, enter'd the room with a pale countenance, yet had not all the sufferings of friendship been able to extinguish the charms of the blooming Deborah, who resembled a cloudy morning in spring. I am come, said she, to rest myself after my weary walk. To thee, the best belov'd of all my friends, I wish everlasting joy. Continue at thy pleasing task, while I repose myself. She then sat down, and gently leaning against the harp, it sent forth a melancholy sound. The skilful stranger then taking the harp, touch'd it with such sweetness, that it sent forth sounds, soft as the murmurs of a distant stream, when, before the howling of a storm, a dead calm reigns through the silent grove. O God of Gods, the stranger sang, thou hast rewarded her who is made perfect by death. But can temporary sufferings deserve the glory to which thou exaltest the bless'd? She was taken away in the bloom of life; yet what is the flower broken by the storm, to the Cedar of God which fell on Golgotha, which a tempest of the

Lord crush'd with such violence, that the rocks and the sepulchres of the dead trembled?

Deborah ceas'd, and now only the strong vibrations of the strings were heard, till the song was thus renew'd: They who attended his funeral, were a small company of the dejected; but the lustre of the heavenly inhabitants was dimm'd, and a funeral hymn was sung by the invisible attendants. Their song was not heard by the earth; but the stars listen'd to the sound. It was heard by Orion and the Judge's Balance. Then a rock rolling with dull convulsive sound, clos'd his grave. There the Saviour rested in death: but soon, ye stars of God, he issu'd forth! To him short was the sleep of death! With glory and with hallelujahs he awak'd!—He awak'd with hallelujahs and with glory! But a few degrees hadst thou, Orion, and thou, the Balance of the Judge, ascended, when he arose. Ye witnesses, throughout all the Heavens, celebrate his resurrection! She who bled in the lonely grove, and he who plung'd the poniard in her heart, saw the gladdening miracle!

Tabitha, with silent amazement, look'd up to the propheteas, who sat on the border of the carpet. In vain she strove to rise, when Deborah, resting on the harp, thus address'd her: Learn, Tabitha; for greatly it imports thee to learn from the resurrection of the dead. Much comfort thou need'st against death; for twice art thou appointed to die. The first born of the dead was, and shall hereafter be, the omnipotent Awakener of those who are fallen asleep. First, with gentle sorrow, as returning to the earth, and cheering expectations of a second creation from the dust, must thou lie down and die. Neither the terrors of the open grave, nor the idea of disfiguring corruption, appals those who know that God will call them to the joys of angels, in his celestial kingdom. Deborah then taking the harp, soft sounds again issu'd from her rapid fingers, and not less charming was her voice, and her lovely countenance.

What inexpressible, what rapturous sensations, said she, did I experience when new life rais'd me from the

flowery grave! When glorification descended to me from the angelic choirs, and my dust became cloth'd with immortality! How I trembled! (She trembled anew, and her splendor broke out.) What a blissful shivering pervaded the most secret recesses of my soul! How was my lustre brighten'd! In what a light of glory was my eternal spirit involv'd! I turn'd my face, and sought the throne of him who had created me anew. He was invisible, yet gentle sounds, intimating the Almighty's presence, breath'd around me. Here her celestial voice softly dy'd on the ear, and the splendid form disappear'd. The thrilling harp was silent, and Tabitha continu'd standing, pale with joy.

Gedor, a man of a tender heart, equally impressible by joy and grief, was firmly resign'd in his submission to the divine dispensations, whether favourable or adverse. He liv'd in a happy retirement with his spouse, his companion both in this and the future life. Their love was known only to themselves and a few friends. Rais'd above this terrestrial state, they oft convers'd about their celestial home, their approaching separation, and their journey to the world of bliss. They fondly wish'd, without presuming to hope, that they should depart together; and thine eye, O Lord! was upon them, to guide them to the entrance of the dark vale. She lay at the point of death, and he seem'd equally near it. Death now approach'd with more hasty steps. She rais'd her eyes from Gedor to Heaven, then cast them on him, and then rais'd them again to Heaven; but such looks of heavenly comfort he had never seen, or heard describ'd. I die! I leave thee, said she, to enter into nameless bliss! Gedor now felt himself powerfully drawn from earth, and near the entrance to that glory which his dearest Cidli was ready to enjoy. Going to her with more than calm resignation, with joy he laid his hand on her pain'd forehead, and thus bless'd her: Depart thou, in the name of the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: in the name of the Great Helper in Israel, whom we have implor'd! Yes, his will, his gracious will be done!

With the voice of reliance and joy she said, Yes, let him do according to the purposes of his will; for all his purposes are founded in goodness.

Gedor, holding her hand, answer'd, As an angel hast thou been resign'd. God has been with thee, God will be with thee. Thanksgivings and praise to his glorious name, he will succour thee! Ah, had I been so unhappy as not to have serv'd him, this day would I fly to him. Be thou my guardian angel. Thou wast mine, answer'd Cidli. Around this happy pair hover'd Rachel, the spouse of Jacob, with a look of mingled pity and placid joy. As yet, O Cidli, she was invisible to thee; but when thine head sunk down in death, thou perceiv'dst the immortal standing, and with joyful raptures went up to salute her.

My hand is unable to conclude the affecting story—Late tears still flowing, run to waste with the other thousands I have already shed; but thou, my song of the great Mediator remain, and flow among the rocks, triumphant over time, and in thy rapid stream, this chaplet, which with tears I pluck'd from the funeral cypress, convey to the lucid regions of futurity.

Under the shade of Moriah stood a house, famous for its tow'ring height. On its silent roof was the son of the wealthy inhabitant, a pious youth in the bloom of life, the joy of his companions, the delight of his mother. The moon was advancing its course in unclouded lustre over lofty Jerusalem, and peaceful Moriah shed tranquil thoughts on those whose powers were not suppress'd by sleep, the nightly death, and chiefly on Stephen, pensive youth! Slowly he walk'd amidst the mazes, in which the history of Bethlehem's Prophet involv'd his mind. His auburn hair hung in graceful locks on his shoulders; he was wrapp'd in a light garment, and was walking about musing, when a stranger, from whom exhal'd the odours of Arabia, came up to him, and began the discourse by observing, that the serenity of the evening had invited him to repose, and added, Know, thou only son of thy fond parent, that I am come from a far

country, and have suffer'd much.—Allow me, worthy stranger, Stephen return'd, interrupting him, before thou relatest thy distresses, to ask thee if thou hast heard of the melancholy death of the great Prophet of Jerusalem? Jedidoth, with more hasty voice, answer'd, Ah, the crucify'd Jesus? who dy'd for the truth, for more exalted truths than those which Moses taught! Jerusalem is fill'd with the report, that he is risen from the dead.

Stranger, thy words fill me with astonishment; thou say'st that he dy'd for the truth, yet thou art come from a far country, how then didst thou learn his doctrines? —How I came to know what he taught, I shall hereafter inform thee. Didst thou know that he not only dy'd and rose again as a witness of the truth, but that he dy'd for thee in the higher character of the Redeemer of man, would'st thou, who art in the bloom of life, and so rich in blessings, think it too much to lay down thy life, in vindication of these great truths? Or wouldst thou cleave to this life, till Nature, at length, with gentle hand, bow'd down thy hoary head to the grave, rather than sooner resign it up for him who has led the way?— What I would do, God alone knows; but what I most passionately wish, is known to me.—What then, O noble youth, dost thou wish?

Ah, pilgrim! why dost thou ask, whether I love the Redeemer enough to die for him? O wish, replete with ecstasy! how my heart beats, and all my powers soar aloft! Were I to die as a witness for Jesus, with joy should my young blood flow from all the streams of life!

Jedidoth, the pilgrim, here related the affecting history of the heroic death of Epiphanius, the youngest of the seven martyr'd sons. He ceas'd; his face glow'd, and a lively radiance beam'd from his eyes, while the youth trembled and shed tears of sympathy. Precious, O youth, are thy tears! said Jedidoth. I count them all! Precious are the tears of the upright, sanctify'd by the sacrifice of Jesus! Now the risen Saviour, looking down from the heights of Tabor, saw the mortal standing in

the light of the moon, while the immortal shone with his native lustre. Stephen being now ready to faint, Jedidoth cry'd, soaring upward, Celestial brother, there I learn'd what Jesus taught me, and pursuing his rapid flight, was conceal'd by the clouds.

Barnabas, the son of Joses, a Levite from Cyprus's distant coast, was going down towards the river Jordan, to view a corn field, in order to observe what promises it afforded of a future harvest. Soon was he join'd by Ananias and Saphira, whom their lands had likewise drawn to visit Jordan's banks. Being come to the brook of Cedron, the beautiful Saphira oft, with unsteady hand, plac'd her staff on the smooth pebbles, wash'd by the shallow stream, before she ventur'd to wet her feet; and now seating herself on a stone by the brook, Ananias sat down by her, and Barnabas stood before them. The place they sat on was to be their future grave. Ah, little did they think, too timorous pair, that the bearers of their bodies would soon rest on those stones, and depart without wishing them a joyful resurrection! But this was known to Elisha, who, together with the venerable Baptist, came hovering round them unseen. O had some breeze wafted Elisha's warning voice, or had John denounc'd to them the great apostle's overwhelming words—(ye have ly'd to God, and not to man)—this place might not have been their grave. But behold, the veil of futurity hangs down, and is not to be drawn up till the judgment day.

Saphira, while thus resting, pluck'd from her grave the earliest flowers of spring, and gave them to Ananias, who was taken up with the thoughts of a gainful harvest. On their reaching their lands, Ananias's discourse turn'd on the fulness of the ears, and the produce when sold. Barnabas thought with pleasure on the cheerfulness of the reapers, when the long wish'd-for evening, with its refreshing coolness, came; when the sprightly circles, crown'd with chaplets, the growth of the flowery field, rejoice under the olive's shade, that they have pass'd through the heat and burthen of the day.

I will appear, said John, to Barnabas, whose seed in

the hilly ground is crush'd by flints. Tell me, my belov'd Elisha, return'd the Baptist, is Ananias to be a Christian? If he be, let us appear to him; for if his thoughts be too much fix'd on earthly things, he stands most in need of our guidance and instruction. Let us then appear to him, said Elisha, but not as rais'd from the dead. They then mov'd towards Salem.

Ananias and his spouse return'd with Barnabas to Jerusalem. There they saw them sitting, blind and lame, near the temple, begging relief, with devout fervour. Barnabas gave them privately, and Ananias, though his possessions were larger, gave them less, and the value of that little was lessen'd by his throwing it grudgingly towards them: on which the blind and lame observ'd, that he did not deserve their appearing before him.

Barnabas now left the company, and was hasting home, when John meeting him, ask'd whence he came? He answer'd from the banks of Jordan, where he had a piece of land. They then enter'd the house, where the joyful children welcom'd their father with their embraces, which he affectionately return'd. Do you too bless my little ones? said the fond parent to the stranger; and then order'd them to go to that good man, who, turning to the children, with a dignity that greatly astonish'd the pensive father, said, Ye children of Barnabas shall likewise bear testimony to the Lord; but from this time fewer will be the sheaves of thy ground.—Will the Lord then forsake me and these helpless orphans? said Barnabas. John answer'd, Far be it from God, on whom we depend for more than life. Earthly things, which last but for a moment, he gives and takes away; but the treasures of eternity shall be thine. Thus spake the Baptist, with increasing dignity in his look, such a dignity as Barnabas had never seen; nor did he ever hear a voice which spoke of God with such solemn fervour. He listen'd absorb'd in wonder, and being still silent, John resum'd, He, whom thou well know'st; he, at whose feet Mary, the sister of Lazarus, chose the better part; he who restor'd to life Jairus's daughter, the

young man of Nain, and Lazarus; even he is rais'd from the dead. I am one of his witnesses, and soon shalt thou be also one of them. Already have I been his witness, when the Divine Spirit descended on him in the river, and the Father's voice from the clouds proclaim'd him his belov'd Son. These words were spoke with a dignity that seem'd to border on glorification. Swift he turn'd, and ascended, while from his vesture issu'd radiations which insensibly decreas'd, till the prophet disappear'd.

Now arose on Judah's hill the fifth morn since the resurrection. Radiant it rose, the harbinger of the brightest day. Portia awoke, but rather from unquiet dreams than refreshing sleep, and early walk'd in her garden; though lost to her was all its fragrance. I have liv'd, said she, to see another morning, yet in my sad mind still reigns perpetual night; for there, O thou Giver of life! arises no lucid day. Perplex'd by continual dreams, I awoke, and lay panting to know Thee, and Him whom his sepulchre no longer detains. Ah, when my last sun declines, will it then also be night with me? Oh, enlighten me! I shall not be dismay'd by the terrors of death, when thou enlighten'st me with thy light. Thy will, O thou Supreme! be done. This thought has oft compos'd my troubled soul, and shall be my refuge in this distress. Repose thyself on the divine will, O my soul! and dismiss thine eager desires.—But why do I delay seeking comfort where a faint glimmering from afar seems to intimate that, at the sepulchre, there may be some who lament his death, and are able to resolve my doubts?

Portia, then beckoning to a servant to attend her, set out for the sepulchre. In their way to it she was seen by Rachel and Jemima, the daughter of Job, who were holding sweet converse. She whom we expected is coming, said Jemima, and is striving to rise above the clouds in which she is involv'd. Let us give her our assistance. They instantly assum'd the appearance of two Greek female pilgrims, who had come to the feast. They

had slender staves in their hands, and their hair was bound with a purple ribbon.

Portia walking slow, immers'd in thought, they pass'd by her; on which the Roman lady said, Pray stay, pilgrims; ye are hasting with melancholy looks to that sepulchre; did you know him who lately lay there? Who art thou that thus questionest us? said one of them. If thou art a Roman, leave us to ourselves, and do not insult us. To insult innocence and piety, said the lady, is to insult the Most High, who dwells in the heavens. Though I am the wife of Pilate, I should think myself base, could I insult you, or ridicule your devotion. Has the report reach'd you, that he whom the sepulchre contain'd, is risen from the dead? Jemima answer'd, Thou speak'st of Jesus in terms very different from those of any idolater; hence thou deserv'st to be inform'd, and we shall converse with thee with the most open simplicity and candour. What we know is more than report. My companion has seen one of the devout, to whom he has appear'd since his resurrection.

Tell me, O happy woman! said Portia, what she saw? Is she still in this world of trouble, or is she remov'd to a better life?

Mary Magdalen, for that is the name of the highly-favour'd woman, is still living, said Rachel: She had sought him in the open sepulchre, and was weeping, till the day beginning to break, she imagin'd that she saw the gardener. But how can I describe her joy, when, turning towards him, she heard his well-known voice, which call'd her by her name! She sunk down on the earth, and trembling cry'd, Rabboni! Weeping she lay, and kiss'd his feet.—Oh, forbear! said Portia; the joy I feel will be too great. How hast thou reliev'd my anguish! He has appear'd, and call'd Mary by her name! Oh most transcendent joy! Who can conceive the bliss he imparted to her? Bring her to me, that, amidst my sorrow, I may raise my languid head, and weeping, admire her. For amidst the stream of joy with which she

is overflow'd, perhaps not a drop will be my portion. I am not of Abraham's race, but a Roman. The Conqueror of Death will only appear to the favour'd daughters of Jerusalem. Oh, why is not a triumph decreed for him? a triumph with which Jerusalem should resound, and Sion and the lofty temple shake! Why are not the statues of your ancestors carry'd before him in august procession? Those of Abraham, Daniel, Job, Moses, and that of the intrepid David, who slew the giant, and from the neck of the suffering people shook the yoke of Philistia? Why do not the multitudes by him restor'd, the lame whom he made to walk, the deaf whom he made to hear, the blind on whose eyes he pour'd the day, and the dead whom he restor'd to life, march in triumph?—But how I forget myself! His kingdom, I am told, he himself said, is not of this world.

Here Portia was silent, and laying aside her wishes for an empty triumph, like those that were the rewards of bloodshed and slaughter, her thoughts were rais'd to the contemplation of his kingdom in the world to come. Jemima now seeing her serene gravity, while she continu'd intent on sublime meditations, was so affected as almost to forget that the object of her admiration was a mortal. The beauty of the rosy evening glow'd on her cheek, and a divine smile sat on her countenance: but, on Portia's turning to her, she instantly resum'd the form of a pilgrim, and looking at her with a gratulatory smile, said, How do I rejoice at thy contemplations on the world to come, and on the vain triumphs of this perishing earth, being too trifling for the Lord of Glory! Thou shalt no more be the sport of error; the dead is risen, and the witnesses themselves will, perhaps, assure thee, that they have seen the Lord, the Conqueror of Death. Assure me! softly breath'd Portia, with joyful accent. Ye doubts, vanish from her mind! resum'd Jemima, laying her hand on the lady's forehead. The Eternal Sovereign, who from the beginning has been the bliss of the heavenly kingdom, be thy God! May he who created thee be thy Redeemer! Tears flow'd from the eyes

of Portia, while the immortal thus bless'd her; but soon recovering her speech, she return'd, Instruct me who thou art? whether an highly-favour'd mortal, or one of the heavenly race, who appear to men? Instruct me what I shall do? Oh, lead me to God! Rachel, with compos'd voice, said, Hast thou been inform'd, O Portia! that many of the dead have risen with Jesus? that, at his resurrection, they came forth from their graves, and appear'd to the pious, who were his disciples? O let me overcome my amazement, and recollect my thoughts! return'd the lady. Is he risen? and are others of the dead rais'd from their graves? O that I might behold such wonders!—We, Portia, will lead thee, resum'd Rachel. Seek not those who have seen Christ, for when he pleases he will send them to thee. In Galilee he will appear to others besides the first witnesses; but in Jerusalem to the first alone. In all countries are these first fruits to make known what he did and taught, and joyfully shall these first witnesses confirm their testimony with their blood. Then at the throne of the great Rewarder, shall their fidelity receive its eternal recompence. Do thou haste to Galilee, and if thou dost not there see him, he will send to thee some of those whom he particularly favours. We now leave thee. These words were soften'd by a smile of cordial affection.

O, I intreat ye, in the name of the most Gracious God, who has also shewn favour to me, cry'd Portia, not yet to leave me. But say, oh say, who are ye? A sensation, such as I never felt before, elevates my conceptions, and powerfully intimates to me, that ye are immortals; but fain would I know it from yourselves; for then no cloud will darken the dawning day which rises in my mind; and may God reward you with celestial knowledge!

With transport they look'd at each other, and resolv'd to stay, saying, We will farther teach thee to offer up thy petitions to Heaven. Then kneeling, they repeated the Lord's prayer. No sooner had they concluded than, lifting up her hands to Heaven, she call'd out, And

thine, O God, is the glory! when instantly they were encompass'd by a celestial effulgence, and the pilgrims rose radiant in the air among the shadowy palms, looking back with affectionate smiles on Eortia, rejoicing in her silent joy. She remain'd kneeling, and, unable to rise, stretch'd out her arms towards them. Jemima soon disappear'd, but Rachel awhile delay'd. Down Portia's florid cheeks stream'd her lively joy, and, light as the leaf rais'd by a cheerful gale, she rose from the earth, crying, Father, thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory. Amen! Thus praying, she hasted back to the gates of Jerusalem.

Beor, a person of a gloomy mind, had retir'd from society, and plung'd himself in solitude. The industrious artizan starts cheerfully from his bed at the dawn; but he broke off his short sleep at unseasonable midnight, and sat in his narrow mansion by a glimmering light, like that of a sepulchral lamp. There must be misery, said he, and therefore some must be miserable. This is decreed by Heaven, and we are oblig'd to bear it. But why are some exens'd from suffering this general lot, and others, like me, rul'd with a rod of iron? Was not I born blind; and did I not long live in blindness? 'Tis true, Jesus gave day to my eyes, and to my soul imparted a glimmering of himself, yet is this now turn'd to night, for he is dead!—Dreadful night! What avails the eye's transient day, when the soul wanders in a gloom, dark as the valley of death! O my eyes, lose your sight! ye can no longer enjoy a view of the creation, nor rejoice in the radiant beams which vivify Sharon's flowers, and the cedars of God! More dark is now my blind soul, than before were these eyes; for, O ye angels, he is dead!

While he was thus giving vent to his lamentations, a man, bow'd down with age, came in, and thus discours'd with him: O Beor! hand me thy cup. More years have pass'd over my head, and much greater have been my sufferings. Greater sufferings than mine! answer'd Beor. Thou art indeed much older: take then my cup;

for I can more easily stoop to the brook. The stranger then ask'd for food, and Beor, shewing him bread, bade him take and eat. O Beor! said the old man, it gives me pleasure to find thee kind to others, though thou harden'st thine heart against thyself. I know thee, Beor; for I was present when the creation was first expos'd to thy view.

If thou know'st me, said Beor, thou know'st the most sorrowful of men. The most sorrowful, as it is beyond my power to remove the cause of my dejection. Alas! a wretchedness like mine should dispirit the most cheerful. Was not I born blind? and did I not thus continue during the most valuable part of life? Besides, is not my mental blindness still greater, with respect to the knowledge of him whom God sent to perform the gracious miracle? and will his death enlighten me with new knowledge? Speak now, Didst thou ever know sorrow like mine? Have I not reason to fear that my being wretched from my birth is a proof that I shall be perpetually wretched? for unremitting pain is a presage of that to come.

Did not he, said the stranger, when thou didst least expect it, unveil to thee the porch of the sanctuary, this splendid earth, its fulness of blessings, with its irradiating sun? Thus he gave thee greater joy than was ever felt by any who had always enjoy'd their sight; and will not He, who is the Son of the Eternal, open to thee the future world? Would this, Beor, be likewise wretchedness and the punishment of sin? The God of Glory will pour his beams on thee; Jesus will display them to thy mind; for from thy birth thou wast chosen to be one of his witnesses. Such have been the determinations of the Eternal.

Beor exclaim'd, Thou lead'st me into new depths of inquietude. Leave me as I am, sunk deep in the abyss in which I lie! Wert thou even an angel of light, I would ask thee how thou, though an immortal, know'st the hidden secrets of the Most High? Can any thing more ex-

seed the verge of human inquiry, than thine assertion, that the Almighty makes wretchedness a prelude to felicity?

Is there then, O thou doubter, said the stranger, no everlasting reward? and has not this eternal reward successive degrees rising to the Heaven of Heavens? Cannot God, cannot the immense Giver of every good, amply recompense sufferings undergone for his sake? Thou stand'st on the ocean, and one small drop, thou particle of dust, can satiate thee!

Venerable old man, said Beor, thou reviv'st my heart. But, if such are God's dispensations, how dare I so far presume, as to think myself one of the bless'd, whom God loads with afflictions, that they may receive a glorious and inconceivable reward?

Thou art one of those! resum'd the stranger, who was the patriarch Job. This I know. Soon wilt thou know it thyself. I already see the crimson blushes of the morning bringing on an effulgent day. Let us ere it comes, kneel, that the Lord may find us praying. They sunk down, and Beor cry'd, O Lord God, merciful and gracious! if I am chosen to be afflicted, that thy mercy to me may be more illustrious, with a thankful heart will I raise my head—with thanks—with thanks to Heaven, that thou hast cover'd my eyes with blindness, and my soul with the gloom of night! For these mercies will I give thee eternal thanks! Then shall my soul rise with triumphant joy, that thou, O God, hast shewn such mercy! O thou Preserver of men! shall the darkness of my soul soon pass away?—O hope! O new and heaven-taught hope! dost thou spring from the Lord? Prais'd, O Father, prais'd be thy glorious name for this bounty, so full of grace! O Lord God, merciful and gracious! eternally bless'd be thy glorious name! thou mad'st me blind from my birth, thou hast sent me sufferings and tears, as divine messengers to instruct me! Thou hast sent me perplexity, doubts, and melancholy, that I might have a more inward, a more humble sense of thy help! —But shall not I also thank thee, O Jesus, the Sent of

God, the Helper in Judah! Alas! added he, lowering his voice, he is dead—He lives! He lives! exclaim'd Job, hastily rising from his knees, cover'd with glory, He lives! and, as a witness that he lives, I, Job, am rais'd from the dead! Dost thou not believe that I have undergone greater sufferings than thee? and whom did I find to pity me?

Beor strove in vain to raise his folded hands to Heaven. As Moses on the day of battle lift up his arms while victory prevail'd, and defeat attended their sinking, so Job kindly held up those of Beor, then joyfully took leave of him, who silently view'd him with a look of deep amazement, Job crying, Lo! he was dead, but now liveth for ever more, and soon shall he ascend into the Heaven of Heavens! Here, with solemn gesture, he pointed with his radiant hand to Heaven, adding, He himself has thus spoken of thee, He was not born blind on account of his own future sins, nor the past sins of his parents; but to shew forth the glory of God. Thus he left Beor, who could scarce support his joy.

Abraham and Moses soar'd to the roof of the temple, and looking down with intent eye on those who had resorted to the feast, to find one to whom they should appear, they observ'd Saul, a young man whose heart was fill'd with fervent devotion, standing by one of the pillars. His eyes beam'd a fire sacred to Him who liveth and reigneth forever. To this young man Moses and Abraham chose to appear, and the service of the temple being ended, they mov'd to attend him, when Gabriel hasted from Tabor's cloud-capp'd summit, with effulgent flight, met them, and said, Ye fathers, forbear; for to him the Lord himself will appear. Who, thou divine messenger, said they, is that exalted mortal, with whom we are forbid to converse? Yonder lies Damascus, said Gabriel, and thither, O distress'd church of God! will he, thine enrag'd persecutor, hasten. About him will he gather troops that will second his rage with unremitting fury; when lo! a sudden light from Heaven will encompass him. He will see the Lord whom he perse-

cuted: he will be convinc'd of his error, and will become a zealous disciple of the Redeemer.

Gabriel ceas'd, and Abraham lifting up his hands, cry'd, O thou Accomplisher of all things! to thy name all in Heaven, on Earth, and under the earth shall bow, and every tongue confess thee to be the Lord, to the glory of God the Father! Their inward ecstasy suppress'd their farther speech; till at length Moses thus bless'd the future disciple. The love of Christ and of the brethren reign in thee. Be thou enabled to cast down the powers that rise against the Lord. Be learned as man: be learned as an angel. Let love likewise dwell in thee; love like that of Christ, which is more valuable than the knowledge of mysteries, dark and obstruse. The love of the brethren, which is mild, patient, and kind, without envy or pride; which no anger disturbs; which seeketh not her own; is not easily provok'd; thinketh no evil; rejoices in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things, hopeth all things. This love be thine, the last born of grace among the holy messengers, to whom Christ himself appears. Those who thus ove shall be the members of the church above; the spotless, the irreproachable church, which is the bride of the Lamb, and wash'd in his blood; in that blood which cries louder than that of Abel, but not for vengeance; which calls louder than the hosts of cherubims from Sinai, and all the thunders and trumpets of the mount of terror, but not for revenge. The patriarchs then soar'd up to Tabor.

Elkanan, Simeon's brother, together with his child-like guide, had, on the mournful evening when they left the mossy tomb, gone to Samma, who, though a gloomy cloud hung over his agitated mind, receiv'd them with cordial friendship, which, with his pressing intreaties, induc'd them to stay. As yet the report of Christ's resurrection was not confirm'd, which Elkanan, Boaz, and Joel lamented. They sat in Joel's fragrant arbour, in the garden which his father had given him, and imagin'd that the effusions of their grief were only heard by the

moon in her nightly course; but other hearers had assembled in a silver cloud: these were Simeon, Benoni, and Mary the sister of Lazarus. The lamentations of the afflicted being stopp'd by overpowering grief, Benoni said, I can no longer forbear making myself known to my father and my brother. Have they not, said Simeon, drank enough of the bitter cup of affliction? Are they not within the reach of the goal, and shall we not bring them the crown?—Yes, we will, Benoni. O Mary! follow us unseen, and thus partake of the delight of beholding their joy. Do thou, Benoni, invest thyself in a milder lustre, that they may not faint under the transporting vision. They then mov'd downward.

The afflicted Samma now said, I was at my son's sepulchre, thou at Simeon's: ah! had we but been at the sepulchre of Jesus, we might, perhaps, if he be risen, have seen him rise—But, O most gracious God! what lustre is that which at a distance shines with such splendor? O Lord God, merciful and gracious, continu'd he, behold it is a messenger from Heaven!—What dost thou see? said Elkanan. What seest thou, Joel? Lead me, that I may speak to the shining appearance. Tell me, what dost thou see? The form of a beautiful youth, said Boaz, walking under the trees, and smiling at us.—Thou bright appearance! cry'd Elkanan, who art thou? A messenger of greater and more exalted salvation than thou canst conceive, said the resplendent form.—Ah! what voice is that? and what face is that I see? It is Benoni, cry'd Joel, sinking down. Benoni instantly stretch'd forth his helping hand, and rais'd him up, crying, My brother!—Joel stammer'd forth his joy, crying out, My brother! my heavenly brother!

Here Joel call'd out, O Samma, my father! and inclining on the old man's breast, kept up the flame of the vital lamp, and preserv'd him from fainting under his tearless ecstasy. He then led the old man to a mossy seat. Elkanan seated himself by him, saying, Now shall I go down in peace to the grave; for though mine eyes have not seen thee, O thou blessed immortal! mine ears

have heard thy voice. Speak, oh speak to us, thou messenger of God?—One greater will teach thee, said Benoni, when thou art more compos'd, and able to support his presence.

While they were speaking, Joel silently approach'd, and gathering flowers, strew'd them on his brother's steps, when Benoni, looking at him with a pleas'd eye, said, Art thou able to support thyself till Simeon appears? Does then Simeon's soul, cry'd Elkanan, hover near me? Be strong in the Lord, Boaz, Samma, and Joel. Soon shall mine ear hear thee, my brother. Simeon, Simeon, come? Mine eyes, my dear brother, cannot see thee: but soon I shall, when having pass'd through the night of death, I shall awake in light!

Invested with celestial splendor came Simeon, advancing through the mild lustre of the moon. With less terror they beheld his radiant form, than Benoni's unexpected brightness, and with great astonishment heard these important words proceed from his lips. Jesus is risen from the dead! and by his almighty power, many of the righteous have come forth from their graves! He appears, and we also appear; but to those only whom he calls to work miracles, and to obtain the first celestial crowns and palms! Yet, before the Redeemer ascends to his Father's throne in triumph, and with the sound of a trumpet, to no less than five hundred believers will he shew himself at once. May ye be among the number! May the Lord bless you with this favour!

Simeon, said Elkanan, art thou risen before the great decisive day? Ah, how my heart pants to see thee! But Jesus himself, O worse than blindness, I shall not see. But my sorrow be dumb, from the sacred hour in which Simeon sees and converses with me on Jesus and his glory, be all complainings banish'd. Five hundred at once! How should I rejoice were I present, and to hear their transports! May'st thou, Simeon, discourse of thy Heaven and its glories?

Not to those, said Simeon, who dwell in the dust. Such is the order of him who exalts and rewards accord-

ing to the trial: who has separated worlds from worlds, and yet united them: who, in his infinite plan of consummate salvation, has united all the bounds of felicity; but, compar'd to the bright display of the happiness of spirits, the sensitive creation is but a shadow. The Most High builds on wretchedness, towering joys—joys to the very bless'd unknown. Yet learn that all eternity cannot exhibit any thing more astonishing, more inconceivable, than that one of the heights of the Mediator's exaltation has humiliation for its base! But pry not into the important thought, which fills the angels with wonder! Know the whole of that happiness which God at present gives you; the pure soul of Mary is present, and rejoices in your joy.

Here all with one voice cry'd out, Is the sister of Lazarus dead? and does she rejoice in our joy? We, Mary, added Samma, also rejoice in thine. How have ye, blessed messengers, dry'd up our tears! O Almighty Father! thou sendest to me my Benoni! to Elkanan his brother! and to Joel his dear brother! added that affectionate youth.

O God! cry'd Samma, what a conclusion hast thou given to my grief! How could I ever presume to entertain such hopes! When my gloomy melancholy, that woe of woes began, sensible of my wretchedness, all around me was darkness, perplexity, and an unfathomable abyss. Futurity itself was a group of sable terrors! Now rouse thyself, O reason! Thou, my dear child! I dash'd against the rock, and stain'd it with thy blood! Till this happy morning I expected to mourn the unnatural deed, during my remaining life! Yet this ends in celestial joy—in the most blissful meeting ever known! O Benoni! my son Benoni! who wast bruis'd by the bloody rock, how great has been the mercy of our heavenly Father to thee! How great his mercy to me, who, through thee, has shewn me such favours! I know that thou art going to leave me; yet thy going will not be a departure; for I shall ever have thee in mine eyes, array'd as now, in celestial glory, an heir of Heaven. But

one request I have to make thee, O Benoni! give me thy blessing.—I, Samma, bless thee! said Benoni, the son, the father! and thy youngest son!—My first-born now, return'd Samma, and elder than I—elder in the days of eternity! For thine is real life! This is but a sleep, to which our last awakens us!

Benoni then with uplifted hands, and his radiance increasing as he spake, said, Ah, soon may thy last day come, and gentle and soft as Simeon's dying day!

Joel then added, I would likewise ask thy blessing, didst I not fear that thou wouldst bless me with length of days.

That, O youth, cry'd Benoni, is fearing a great reward. The deeper a life of goodness strikes its root here, the higher shoots its top in Heaven, and the wider spreads its leafy branches. Say, shall I now, my Joel, my brother, bless thee? Joel kneeling, Benoni laid his hand on his glowing forehead, saying, Receive the blessing of blessings, Eternal life be thine! May God, who rais'd Jesus from the dead, lead thee to him! They then disappear'd; on which Boaz cry'd, O Elkanan, they are vanish'd! and Joel rising, thus express'd his grateful joy: O, spotless spirit of Mary, shouldst thou still remain on earth, convey to them our most lowly and most fervent thanks, for their gracious appearance to us, their heavenly discourse, and inestimable blessings. Thus spake the youth, and sunk into his father's arms.

The mother of Jesus was sitting on the lofty roof, with the sacred harp by her side. The sun was set, and the evening star cheer'd the serene firmament; when behind the brook she beheld the appearance of a female pilgrim, who, soon assuming an etherial form, soar'd aloft, and, in celestial lustre, alighted on the roof close by her. Amazement had now no longer place in the mind of the blessed Mary. She was sensible that it was either an angel, or a person rais'd from the dead; for she had seen the risen body of her son.—To thee, the mother of the Lord, said the bright appearance, I do not veil myself: for thou wilt soon shine with me before the throne! I

too, Mary, am a mother—the mother of the obedient Abraham; of the heavenly Enoch, who was exempted from lying in the grave. I am even she who brought forth the Restorer of Innocence. I am the mother of mankind. And hither am I come to join with thee in praise of thy Son, the great Emanuel.

Mary and Eve, with alternate answers and replies, thus continu'd the discourse: I see, O joy unutterable! the mother of Abel and Cain! But can I, O thou immortal!—can I, who have not tasted of death, sing with the mother of men? But the Redeemer is the subject of our song. Begin then, O Eve! and teach me to sing of my exalted Son.

Twice was I created by his power! He who was born of thee, call'd me twice into life! He, O mother! was born, who created both thee and me, and who form'd the heavens!

He who created the sun, the moon, and the stars, and form'd even thee and me, O Eve! was born. This was the hymn sung by the angels of God, when he was born in a stable.

When the procession, chanting hymns of praise, return'd to Heaven, the top of the tree of life wav'd, and celestial spirits bow'd in reverence to the new-born babe.

He cry'd in a manger at Bethlehem. Yet, before he wept, the angels had proclaim'd his name, and call'd him Jesus. The cedars and palms heard the name of Jesus! Tabor, and thou bloody Golgotha, heard the name of Jesus!

The throne from which the Lord's anointed descended, and all the host of Heaven, kneeling, heard his name!

O thou mother of men! didst thou see my Holy Son expire? Didst thou hear him cry, It is finish'd? Didst thou hear him exclaim, O Father! into thy hands I commend my spirit!

Ah, I heard the words of eternal life! I heard the players on the harps chanting forth the praises of the exalted Redeemer, when, raising his head, he cry'd, It is

finish'd! and when lifting up his eyes to Heaven, he added, Father, into thine hands I commend my spirit!

Praise be to my Son who gave me to mourn! Behold the hours of anguish are now become the subject of my joy! Bless'd am I, who brought forth the Redeemer! Bless'd art thou, the mother of those he has redeem'd!

Bless'd am I, form'd in Paradise from a bone of Adam! My dust has he awak'd! I am the mother of the redeem'd, and thy mother, O Mary!

O thou first daughter of the creation, the risen daughter of the eternal life! from thee is descended the Eternal, whom Mary, a mortal, brought forth in a stable! O thou parent of his mother! celestial joys flow in upon me! I sink in a flood of light! He has bless'd me, and made me the heiress of heavenly felicity! Before my hymn for my belov'd benediction ascends to the throne, once more shall I see him in these fields of death! I have seen the resplendent Gabriel, who has told me that I shall once more behold him! O mother of Abraham, and my mother! sing thy Son's resurrection, when his head no longer sunk down on the lofty cross; his eyes were no longer clos'd; his temples no longer press'd by the bloody crown!

When the thunder of God's omnipotent voice once more proclaim'd, Let there be light,—and there was light, then he arose! Then sunk our harps: then sunk our palms. We shouted hallelujahs to God the Mediator! our hallelujahs ascended like the roaring of the sea. Then the heavens and the earth were silent, till the martyrs sang triumphant hymns; and soon Adam descending to the Mediator, thus address'd him, with an expressive voice: I swear by thee who liveth forever, that, on the great day of the completion of all things, those who sleep shall awake, and death shall be no more!

Ah, his joyful call shall penetrate the partner in his inheritance! Strew my grave with the flowers of the harvest. The seed sown by the Lord shall shoot forth and flourish!

Soon, O Mary! shalt thou lie down in the sleep of

death, that I may receive the mother of the Lord in the vale of peace! In that blissful vale we may sing the Son, who, now from his throne, dries up the tears of Christians, and silences the soft complainings of sorrow!

Behold, He who bore the sins of the world, is love! He who took on him the griefs of Adam, and hung on Calvary, is love! He is love, who, unknown and despis'd, gave himself up to die as a sacrifice—as a sacrifice for sin, while the archangels themselves were struck dumb with wonder!

Thus they sang. Eve then departed, and Mary's wondering eyes long follow'd her effulgent flight towards Tabor.

The holy band now began to return to the mount of Transfiguration, there to rejoice together in the joy they, by their appearance, had infus'd into the hearts of mortals. As when twilight gives place to approaching night, the stars successively come forth from the immense creation, so assembled those resplendent beings, and gradually overspread the sacred mount.

Cidli, Jarius's daughter, sat in an arbour on the roof of the house where she liv'd, observing the lustre of the rosy dawn. She had not seen her belov'd Semida, since he left her to visit his former grave. O guiltless love! said she, for so I dare call thee, when wilt thou leave me? If I was rais'd from the dead, that I might solely consecrate myself to God, O love, to me all pain, yet full of innocence! why dost thou stay with thy unremitting softness? But if I am not rais'd to consecrate myself entirely to my Maker, how shall I know it? Who will deliver me from the maze of doubt?

Cidli was then join'd by one who appear'd to be a female pilgrim that came to the feast, and had been conducted to the roof by her mother. The pilgrim began: I have been seeking one of those who have testify'd the glory of Jesus; who, while in his state of abasement, rais'd to life the brother of Mary, the young man of Nain, and thyself. Thou hast heard of thine Awakener's triumph over death; but has the report reach'd thine

ear, that many saints arose after his expiring on the cross, and appear'd to the righteous who love him? I love him —I love him, O pilgrim! cry'd Cidli, Is this report really true? It will not be long, return'd the pilgrim, before thou wilt be convinc'd by thine own experience. 'Tis said, that the righteous who are risen will assemble on the Mount of Transfiguration, and I will join the sacred assembly with thee, who hast been rais'd from the dead. I, O pilgrim! said Cidli, have been rais'd from the dead; but am still mortal. Yet will I go with thee. Should we see any bright apparitions, thou wilt support my sinking spirits. The mother, Cidli, and the pilgrim then set out for Tabor.

Semida had, by his meditations and his assiduous inquiries after the Redeemer's resurrection, overcome his doubts, and his heart rested in the firm belief of that glorious event, so rich in blessings. His love now return'd, and Cidli appearing created for him, his tenderness took possession of all his powers. I am in the midst of darkness, cry'd he, and who will lead me through it? How shall I be certain that my dearest Cidli, whom I love with a celestial flame, returns my passion? Who will lift me to the lucid summit of joy, or sink me into the vale of sorrow?—But be still my grief. Yet how strange is my fate! In the bloom of active life, I fell a victim to death. On my being again permitted to breathe the vital air, I imagin'd myself immortal; but how was I mistaken! I found myself unhappy in not having exerted the utmost ardour in learning wisdom from him who dy'd and rose again, that I might render it a seed for a bless'd harvest, when time shall be no more. O thou who art rais'd from the dead! before thou ascendest to the Father, call me to thee, that I may learn more of what thou hast term'd the one thing necessary.

Here a stranger hastily coming up, said, O young man! it is in thy power to assist me. Above the foot of mount Tabor lies a man, who appears grievously wounded by robbers. In the way sits one who seems

blind and perishing with thirst, while no spring is near. In the way to him lies an old man, who, spent with fatigue, has fallen, and lies groaning on the rock. Pity also my weakness and thirst.

Semida, with generous warmth, cry'd, Here is something for thyself, and the others. The rest of my store I'll reserve for the old man, who shall be my care. Go thou to the blind.

Semida, advancing to the old man, gave him bread, and refreshing juice of the vine. Then raising him up, went to the pilgrim, to assist him in succouring the blind, and promising to return and conduct him to Jerusalem, hasted forward to ascend the mountain, light as the breath of the early dawn: but had scarce pass'd its foot, when he perceiv'd Cidli between her mother and the pilgrim. A torrent of mingled joy and timidity rush'd upon his mind, yet he proceeded with his unknown guide, who brought him to the man who had been wounded, and lay a dismal spectacle, pale and cover'd with blood. They were binding up his wounds, when Semida turning, saw Cidli approach, and she, observing him employ'd in affording relief to the wounded traveller, with a mixture of joy and melancholy, trembling pass'd by. Semida, with tremulous eagerness, ran after her; but, on his overtaking her, the passions that affected their minds obstructed their speech, and they stood gazing at each other in silence. When the female pilgrim bidding her not to stay, Semida cry'd, Must I again so soon part with my Cidli? She then returning no other answer but a flood of tears, follow'd her guide.

Semida, with his companion, remain'd comforting the wounded traveller. Meanwhile two men, his brothers, came up, and all three expressing their warmest thanks for Semida's humanity, he, with the kindest wishes, took his leave.

In proceeding up the mountain, said the stranger, we will take a shorter way than they have chosen, and will meet them at the summit. I will accompany thee, said Semida; but wilt thou return back with me? The stran-

ger answering that he should not, Semida desir'd to know where he liv'd; on which the other return'd, that blissful was his home, and that heavenly friends expected him there. Talk not then of poverty, said Semida, since thou hast valuable friends to gladden thy life: let me know their names. The stranger, with a look of complacency, said, These are some of my friends, and then mention'd several of the patriarchs and worthies of Israel. Semida view'd him with astonishment, and this was greatly increas'd when instantly he beheld his face glow with celestial beauty, and become resplendent. The more this increas'd, the more did a mixture of joy and fear spread paleness on Semida's cheeks; but his immortal friend supported his trembling steps.

In the other path, the female pilgrim, who was cheerfully follow'd by the mother of Cidli, suddenly stopping and turning to her, said, My worthy friend, follow me no farther; for they only who are risen from the dead are allow'd to appear at the Messiah's triumph. Must I then, said she, part from my Cidli, from whom I have never yet been separated? Oh, soon, my heavenly daughter, return, and rejoice thy mother, by relating what thou shalt now see. God grant that the glories thou wilt behold may heel all thine inquietudes! Return towards Salem, said Megiddo, the pilgrim, to the mother! for thou wilt not see again the happy daughter. My dear, said Cidli, may the Lord be thy guide! Thou heavenly friend, let me soon return to embrace my mother!

They tenderly embrac'd, and then parting, the weeping eyes of the afflicted mother long follow'd them. As they drew near the summit of the mountain, Cidli, while absorb'd in silent astonishment, saw at a distance in a grove of cedars, Semida with his companion, who now shone with all his splendor. Semida likewise perceiv'd her. The two mortals stopt, walk'd forward, trembled, and stopp'd again, while on either side, radiant beings, smiling, gather'd round them. Oh, how bright, though yet unknown, shone the old man, the blind, and the wounded traveller with his brethren! The celestials

around them increas'd in number and effulgence. No words can express the transports of the loving pair. They gaz'd around, fill'd with wonder, then downward casting their humble eyes, strove to speak, but their trembling words stopp'd in the midst of their broken utterance. How great was their joy and fear, when environ'd by the ineffable splendor, and the soft sweet-sounding benedictions of the immortals near them! they approach'd each other; then express'd their thoughts; and, happy pair! their glorification began, and was soon complete. They then flew into each other's embraces, now no longer liable to a separation. To meet again, O thou loving! to meet again, when with the dust of one, the dust of the other rests! was Cidli's thought; but it was only a dream of Cidli's joy. She now shed other tears; but it was only for Semida's joy she wept.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XVI.

The Argument.

The Messiah, as Judge and Ruler of every created world, sits, for the first time, upon the Tabor, surrounded by angels and patriarchs, to judge the souls of those recently deceased, who, at his command, appear before him. The guardian angel of one of the planetary worlds requests the Messiah to hasten the moment of its happy transmutation. An inhabitant of another globe is punished for his murmurs. The Messiah descends into hell. The punishment which he there inflicts upon the rebellious spirits.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XVI.

I SHOULD not pay due homage to the Eternal Son, the glorified of God, were I not to declare, that it was by Him and for Him, that the Eternal, from the void of chaos, erected this and every other world; and that the host of people, whom he alone can number, and whose natural intelligence, and his choice, render capable of enjoying supreme felicity, are under his dominion, till the time, when forsaking the labyrinths of the infinity of worlds, they shall all unite in the straight road, that they may all reach the goal which is the salvation of all. But if Jesus had not exclaim'd upon the cross, It is finish'd! this innumerable host of beings, whose future happiness was thus insur'd, would not have been able, in due process of time, also to proclaim in their heavenly abodes, The great end is accomplish'd! But the redemption had been promis'd, even at the creation.

Jesus Christ, the divine Son of the Father Eternal, having been made man, again ascended the summit of that mount, destin'd to be his temple, till he should have ascended to the right hand of the Father. This, then, was the earthly throne of Him who was the Ruler of every world! The Tabor trembled under his feet, and shone with reflected light! He was surrounded by those risen from the dead, who had previously appear'd to the faithful upon earth; and, at a distance, by the cherubims of God. These awful circles were open to-

wards the Holy of Holies. Christ was in the midst, reclining upon a mossy rock: he was no longer in a state of suffering, since even the resplendent brightness of the angels and the patriarchs was eclips'd in his presence, and the brilliant corruscations emanating from Eloa, merely appear'd like the first streaks of the rosy dawn after a summer's night. But whenever his eye, beaming with the divinity, was turn'd upon them, they felt the most exquisite rapture of which their limited being was susceptible: each was perfectly satisfied with the rank in which he was plac'd; and all were, through him, supremely bless'd.

A cherubim, whose superior intelligence enabled him to understand a look which he receiv'd from the Saviour, directed his flight in conformity to his wishes; and soon return'd, conducting a host of spirits who had departed this life since the resurrection of the divine Son, and whose afflicted relatives and friends were still employ'd in committing their earthly bodies to the grave, or in planting cypress round their funereal urns: ere the flowers which their friends were strewing upon their graves were faded, the beings, whom these fresh-blooming flowery chaplets conceal'd, were ripe for judgment. The messenger of Christ summon'd these spirits to accompany him to the Tabor: their appearance, as they drew near, resembled that of a summer-shower, which, glittering in the beams of a watery sun, seems to descend from a serene sky; but in those parts where the thickest clouds are unenlighten'd by those revivifying beams, the darkness seems more opaque: as when a debate arises in an ardent soul between its passions and its reason, it is overwhelm'd by a torrent of ideas, either true or false; since these latter assume the deceitful appearance of truth, when the magic wand of inclination gives them a seducing form. The spirits of mortals thus, for the first time, appear'd before the judgment-seat: they hover'd before Christ, and express'd their rapture and amaze by joyful and fearful exclamations, when they perceiv'd a Supreme God in

the centre, surrounded, as they conceiv'd, by other divinities (1). The Ruler of every world thus question'd them, Spirits, who are ye? A confus'd and stifl'd murmur indicated that they meant to reply. Some whisper'd a modest but just report of themselves, but the greater number gave in a very proud report of their deserts: now in face of the most resplendent of Gods, they found it was in vain to hope to deceive him, or to conceal their errors. Some of the inferior divinities separated, from among the crowd, a certain number of spirits, whom they led towards the superior God, who now sat in judgment upon them. A few rapid words, and still more rapid signs, suffic'd to instruct the angels who gave in their evidence, and who grasped scrolls in their hands, trac'd in characters of fire: sometimes they mysteriously roll'd the sheets together: sometimes they display'd the awful brightness of others. Some spirits spoke: others hover'd around in silence. The sentences of their Judge came like the lightning's blast towards the souls of evil—and to the good, as does the sudden joyful burst of the bright orb of light and day on one restor'd from blindness to his sight (2).

By one awful look he seal'd their doom—by one bright glance, pointed to the surrounding angels, their destin'd road. Many roads lead towards the bottomless gulph, and many roads also lead to Heaven (3). Some are thousands of centuries on their journey: others complete theirs in a few hours. The reason why some are exalted even to the throne of God, and others are, alas! condemn'd to everlasting sufferings, are either explain'd to them by the inhabitants of those worlds in which they are at first plac'd, or they are left to the stings of their own consciences, which never fail to enlighten them. Among the spirits who were approaching the Tabor, several fell prostrate even unto the earth, exclaiming, Jupiter! God of thunder, have mercy on us! Brama! Tien! (4) Father of all! we have stray'd from thy ways, have been negligent of our duties, and have sinn'd against thy laws! Jupiter! Saturn! (5) Master of

the Gods! have mercy upon us! But the Redeemer gave orders to the attentive cherubims conformable to the actions of those who were plac'd before the judgment-seat.

He who has follow'd the course of the Euphrates (6), from the star which rises at the extremity of Mount Lebanon, even unto the seventh cedar of the grove, has greatly sinn'd; but, form'd with passions strong and impetuous, the temptations which led him astray were too powerful: when he shall approach the rays of Phiala (7), the inhabitants of that planet may teach him to revere the name of his Saviour.

This other spirit, who comes from the vicinity of the Ganges, was gloomy, flexible, and deficient in strength of mind: it shall ascend towards Hermon: never let him hear of me as his Judge; but, sooner than to the former, as soon as he first descries the light emanating from Engeddi, mention me to him as his Redeemer.

Why dost thou humble thyself so profoundly, even to the very dust? The pride of this soul led him to be cruel: lead him to hell, before I again set my foot upon the mount of Olives. Oh, Jupiter! listen to my prayer: Calm thine anger—but he fell, depriv'd of motion, before his Judge. If thou hadst not betray'd thy friend (8), the Angel of Vengeance should not have hurl'd thee from my presence. The signs of the Messiah told the angels how and whither to lead these spirits.

Soon as this faithful spirit hovers over the source of Bethlehem, before his fellows give him a palm of reward, thou hast had faith in the mercy and in the reward of the Father of all (9). Learn now, thou man of worth, that God is greater and more powerful than thou didst suppose him to be!

This one never rose but to arm himself for war, and even, when reposing, he was meditating upon fresh conquests. With respect to this blood-thirsty being, the look of the Sovereign Judge might truly be compar'd to lightning; and his will was promptly understood and obey'd.

May the tongues of all the adders and blasphemers of

hell hiss at this deceitful calumniator, when thou hast, oh angel! plung'd him into the bottomless gulph of hell!

Suddenly a cherubim, with floating hair, and whose cheeks were suffus'd with the deep glow of fire, rush'd from the Milky Way, and fell prostrate before Jesus Christ, the Ruler of every world! Holy Mediator, he cried, the planet of which I am the guardian approaches the term of its transmutation: the inhabitants of the higher star have already a certain prescience of their speedy flight towards the first source of light: it is therefore with difficulty that they restrain their impatience to enjoy the revivifying warmth proceeding from those torrents of light: the hope which they now entertain is certainly a foretaste of their final beatification: nevertheless, you would grant them a very great favour, if you would forward the moment of their elevation. Might I venture to touch Gethsemane and its olive trees? This would give a rude shock to the poles of my planet: the columns upon which its foundations rest would be the sooner overthrown, and also her starry firmament.

Cherubim, thou mayst touch Gethsemane and its palm-trees! The cherubim hasten'd to avail himself of the permission, that his planet might the sooner arrive at her glorious end.

Before Kermath (10) came his guardian angel, who, smiling affectionately on him, thus address'd him: Thy thoughts were too noble, too elevated, my brave Kermath, for the men with whom thou wert doom'd to live: therefore they misunderstood and hated thee. Thou mayst now dry those tears, which the bitter grief their contempt occasioned thee, led thee to shed in private. Come and receive the reward which thou hast acquir'd by thy patience, and by the extreme goodness of thy heart. Raise thine eyes (he pointed out a planet to him): thou art to be plac'd there, where thou wilt enjoy the first dawn of felicity; and from thence thou wilt rise, by degrees, during the course of eternity, from

the first tinge of ethereal brightness to the dazzling splendor of its full glory, and from mere pleasure to excess of joy. They then rose together towards this first degree of happiness promis'd to the just man.

One of the kings of India had departed this life, and his soul, hardly as yet awaken'd from the last sleep of its terrestrial body, fancied it was slowly wandering in an endless labyrinth. But, soon recovering from this state of apathy, though still vain glorious, since this feeling did not desert him even in death, he thus express'd his surprise: Where are the spirits of my slaves (11), who purposely terminated their existence that they might be buried with me, and continue to serve me even after death? why do they not proclaim the approach of their master, the deceased monarch? But having at last reach'd the termination of these gloomy vaults, he perceiv'd before him an immortal, who, by a gesture of his right hand, induc'd him to stop. The heavenly youth, then looking at the astonish'd soul, with a half smile, Follow at a distance, said the angel to the sovereign; the light that thou wilt perceive extends itself behind me. The monarch was obliged to do so; and, having soon reach'd the accumulating crowd of spirits, sentence was speedily pass'd upon him.

Ah! cried the spirit of another mortal, just awaking from its dream of life, here I may certainly hope to be freed from all my troubles and vexations, since those I see here are Gods, and they must be just: but not so men: they are envious, blind persecutors of innocence, and they despise those who are more honest and better than themselves. The expectations of this spirit were not deceiv'd: he was rewarded.

Gelimar was extended upon the bed of death: he was a young man of an ardent mind, and in the brilliant morning of his age; his friend, who stood by his side, endeavour'd to assuage his burning thirst with the pure element, drawn from a refreshing spring. For ever! exclaim'd Gelimar. Didst thou flatter thyself with other hopes? No, we part for ever! such is the lot of all nature,

from the sturdy oak to the meanest flower: it is that of thy youthful friend, who is now dying before thy eyes: it will be thine, and that of every being who now inhales the vital air. All is over—all our vital functions and faculties are suspended, when we fade, wither, and die, and return to dust, as if we had never been! What mean those consoling, yet sad looks, young man? Wouldst thou undertake to console me? To what purpose, since I die?—May thou be consol'd, that thy span of life may be extended!—I have long dreaded this awful moment; but, while in the flower of my age, I did not wish to encourage such serious thoughts, to interrupt my present enjoyments. Alas! my time is come, and I must speed me hence! But whither shall I go? Will it be to the grave? Possibly I shall not go any where; for when I am no more, I shall be dissolv'd—annihilated. Thou wilt not bestow upon this corrupted corpse the name of the friend thou hast lov'd? I have hitherto endeavour'd to spare thy feelings, and to check thy tears: I can no longer dissimulate: the iron arm of death is extended to seize me, and my dying soul will perish with my body. How terrific is this gloomy, this dreadful idea!—I must die! and thus o'erthrown, I shall be reduc'd to dust!—Listen to my last words, my belov'd friend, and store them in thy memory, as a warrior sets store by his shield. I do not complain to the Gods because they have doom'd me to die, and to annihilation. Such weak mortals as we are, are too insignificant to be deem'd worthy of immortality. Go, hasten to draw me another draught of that refreshing stream which so recently allay'd my parching thirst: though, if I am to die, may my release be speedy! His friend complied with his wishes; but the grateful beverage merely hastens his death. He turns pale, faints, shudders, and dies!

The spirit, separated from the body, as yet partakes of the lethargy of the latter; but suddenly awaking, as from a trance, it soars aloft, and, by a vehement exclamation of delight, expresses its astonishment: already

its harmonious voice, in gentle accents, declares its admiration and its rapture. Ye Gods! exclaim'd the spirit, ye immortal Gods! is it possible? ye solar and ye lunar Divinities, can it be possible? I yet live! He that was dead, still lives!—Ye Gods of heaven and earth, and of all the planets!—Ah! I exist!—This is not the last dream of my mortal body! I really exist! I am no longer one of those beings who fade like a flower! Holy Gods! most holy Gods! Divinities of the sun, the moon, and the stars, which appear to me more resplendent than ever, who are ye? where shall I seek you? where, ye mighty and eternal Gods, shall I fall prostrate? where shall I shed tears of gratitude for my renewed existence, which is now mine to all eternity? where now sighs my friend? I soar too much above the earth! Where is my suffering friend, who grieves at the idea of quitting his earthly tenement as I have done? Oh, best and tenderest of friends! why didst thou not resign thy breath when I did? Thou believest that thou wilt be destroyed! but these holy and beneficent Gods—these Arbitrators of our life and death —these eternal Gods have not doom'd us to annihilation. Dare I descend to shew myself to him in the grove, where he is digging my grave, to take my last leave of him, to fortify his mind against the horrors of death, and to elevate his ideas towards a blessed immortality?

At this moment he perceiv'd some beings like himself, who were descending towards the Tabor: he saw others who bore no resemblance to him, and who appear'd to him to be of divine origin: he advanc'd towards these latter, and humbly ador'd them, crying, I exist! accept my most sincere thanks: I honour, love, and adore you, oh ye eternal Gods! for having bestow'd upon me immortality! The angel he address'd thus replied, We are also created beings.

Who have died as I have done? asked Gelimar: who have risen from the dead as I have done?

There is but one God, was the answer. He also created us; but we rank among immortals. Follow our

steps. He who form'd the suns, the cherubims, and the souls of mortals like thee, will soon teach thee to know him.

He was thus led towards the Redeemer, to whom he paid his first homage; and then follow'd his guide along the path which God had ordain'd he should pursue.

Many times did the sun rise and set during the period that the Saviour of mankind continued to sit in judgment upon the spirits of the deceas'd, who incessantly appear'd before him. Their approach might be compar'd to the showers proceeding from the effects of a storm, which sometimes fell in torrents, at others, drop by drop, which were lost in arid desarts, or in the murm'ring rivulets which water'd the cultivated plains: and the spirits were either plung'd in despair, or were dilated with rapture, according as the decisive scales of Fate rose or fell.

Suffer a meand'ring serpentine rivulet here to interrupt my narrative, while I express my personal feelings upon my recovery to health. A hundred moons have revolv'd round the globe during the interruption (12) of my faint attempt to describe our Divine Mediator sitting, for the first time, in judgment upon the spirits of mortals. The heavenly ray of hope, which my sincere belief in him had imparted to my soul, which led me to expect, that, through his mercies, I should enter the bless'd abode of the Most Holy, was disturb'd by my regret for not having been a more able labourer in his vineyard. Thus, alternately a prey to hope, and the victim of dread, I yet felt the necessity of entire submission to the will of the Most High. Those by whom I was surrounded did not wish to deceive me: sometimes they taught me to expect that I should live: at others they desir'd me to prepare to die.

The solemn silence of some sufficiently denoted the danger of my situation; but my strength of mind never forsook me. I was not infected by their alarm, nor would I suffer them to depress my spirits by their fears. I recover'd; and I still pursue my terrestrial career. And

I thus return my thanks to the Lord of Hosts, to whom not only praise, but adoration is due: thanks I repeat to the Most High, the Mediator and Preserver of mankind! The being comfortably situated in this world renders us less anxious to remove even into another, and even a better: yet the hour of our death insensibly approaches, and each day we draw nearer the land of promise: and, oh! what enjoyment have I then in store! Though by no means an able searcher of hearts, when elevated amidst the superior spheres, I shall from thence contemplate, every succeeding moment, the souls of the incredulous, of the atheists, and of Christians, assembling in crowds beyond the boundaries of the earth. Friends will then meet those friends, whose tears, which have flow'd for their decease, are hardly dry. The widow, who has long been resign'd to the decrees of Heaven, will advance among the crowd, borne upon the passing clouds. When the fate of all will be known, some will be enlighten'd, and none will be any longer conceal'd by an enigmatical state of obscurity: when each atom will be weigh'd according to its value, and ev'ry illusion will be dissipated. Every man, who is eager in the pursuit of knowledge, and of a speculative turn of mind, must feel anxious, even here below, to be speedily translated into a future world, were it only that he might be initiated in the fate of his fellow-creatures; and thus penetrate into those (in his present state) forbidden lab'rinths, without fear of losing his road, which must alone prove a source of never-failing felicity.

But now, rivulet, cease thy meanders: let thy murmurs be lost amid the torrents of my song respecting the new covenant.

The palace of a monarch had fallen in: the souls of those who had been crush'd in the ruins were arraign'd at the bar of Eternal Justice: they had all been either tyrants or voluptuaries. One only amongst them could boast of having had a good heart. The envious crowd surround and endeavour to conceal him. He suffers

them to do so; but, soon after, he alone remain'd in sight of the angels: thus an honest man, whose reputation is attack'd by calumniators, disdains to defend himself, convinc'd that the assertions of his enemies are best refuted by the even tenor of his life.

But this blood is still warm! those eyes still roll! they are not yet absolutely fix'd! those members still palpitate! but now he falls motionless upon the earth, and expires!—This was a mortal who, in the fury of despair, had directed his unsteady poniard against his own heart: he had thrown it from him, but hastily recovering it, he contemplated the destructive weapon with a furious smile. A gloomy foreboding made him fancy he saw blood wherever he cast his eyes: his own seem'd flowing from his burning veins. He then tranquilly pointed his sword towards his heart, but forbore to strike, till, gaining strength from his increasing despair, he plung'd it into his ulcerated bosom, which groan'd under the stroke, while the earth resounded with his weight as he fell prostrate in death. His soul now appears before the Judge, having as yet but very imperfect ideas respecting those clouds which are enlighten'd by the full moon; or respecting those stars which enlighten other clouds. But, oh!—The Gods (13) entirely awaken him! all the celestial beings tremble and fear for him: nevertheless, the Judge's smiles announce his pardon! such a smile was omnipotent, and changes his despair into rapture.

Elisama had at last laid his hoary head in the grave: he was an indigent old man, who, supported by a cane, dragg'd his feeble frame to the gates of the rich, to implore his daily bread: his drink he drew from the crystal stream. He possess'd a feeling heart, and was inur'd to hardships. A hero, in every sense of the word, he had not only patiently borne the greatest misfortunes, but had constantly bless'd the Creator of all things, the Distributor of good and evil, for having afflicted him. Kings might have deriv'd honour and profit from his society, and yet he was despis'd by the

most contemptible among the people! He was known to be dead, and yet no one came forward to bury him: his faithful dog alone mourns for him, licks his cold hand for the last time, and dies of grief! Elisama now appears before the Judge. A cherubim, beaming with joy, presents him a crown of glory, by order of the Supreme Arbitrator. A soft murmur of joy spread along the extensive circle of angels, and of the risen, when the cherubim thus rewarded this tried servant of God.

Zadech had strictly fulfill'd the law, which he had found the more easy, as no contrary desires had arisen in his heart to lead him to infringe them; and such were his mistaken prejudices, that he prided himself upon his small inheritance, and fancied he deriv'd great merit from feeding upon mouldy bread, and from drinking out of a wooden goblet the water of a stagnant pool, and from inhabiting a ruinous mud cottage, and not possessing more than a few copper coins. Woe be to those who despise the poor! But may woe also be the portion of the miserable wretch who makes a merit of being wretched, who is even more blameable than the rich miser, when he neglects to correct his own errors in consequence of this foolish presumption, and who fancies, that without practising humility he shall obtain a crown of glory when he dies, because he has chosen to be miserable upon earth! His companions in misery bury the indigent Zadech, and his soul appears before his Judge. Descend with him! was the order he gave a cherubim, who instantly prepar'd to obey. Zadech excuses himself, turns from him, wishes to fly, but is unable, screams, is silent, and then speaks. Me? who have so exactly attended to the letter of the law! Me? who expected a reward proportionate to my zeal! Me? Who art thou, oh thou! whose rays are ting'd with blood? why dost thou lead me along this terrible road? didst thou perfectly comprehend the order the Judge gave thee? Oh! do not be so angry: I tremble under the motion of thy wings: I shrink from the lightning which flashes from thine eyes—which seems ready to

exterminate me! How unjust to constrain me thus to follow thee! Oh that thou wert but ingulph'd in utter darkness, or consum'd by flames which would eclipse thy rays! Who art thou, I repeat? Leave me, I request.

While speaking, he push'd a thick cloud against the cherubim, which instantly became a mere transparent mist; and in another moment it dissolv'd in light vapours before the resplendent rays which surrounded the cherubim, who still continued his flight: the soul felt the power of the immortal, and yet continues to defend itself, and to revolt against its angelic conductor; but all that it could do was to precipitate itself the depth of three mountains. The cherubim, no longer inclin'd to spare him, recall'd him by a thunder-bolt. The soul rose in trembling from the abyss in which it had sought refuge, and submissively follow'd its heavenly guide.

Two armies were engag'd: the chiefs on either side were kill'd. The dead and the wounded lay extended on every side of this now silent field of battle. The shades of these dead warriors, with their immortal guides, rose in such numbers, that they could only be compar'd to the fast-falling drops of a sudden shower. The Judge of the world raises his right hand: instantly the most tremendous thunder-bolts are hurl'd against the two guilty chiefs: the surrounding echoes long repeat the dreadful sound which pursues the steps of these enemies to humanity: the hollow murmur still continues, and is heard even with horror amid the profundity of the caverns of Gehenna (14), from whence there soon ascended the voice of those who were cursing their destiny, and the harsh sound of the whips employed in flagellating the criminals. The soldier, who had just fallen a victim to their sanguinary dispositions, exclaim'd while striking them, Here we also inflict the sufferings of death! and again he angrily raises his arm to renew the strokes. The chains which now bind the conquerors slowly clash, and emit a mournful sound; but the sardonic laugh which arose from the bottomless gulph was still more appalling.

But now were heard the most heavenly sounds: angels, striking their golden harps, chaunted forth their joy with sweetest harmony: they celebrated the approach of a crowd of infant spirits, which, disengag'd from their corporeal bodies, were advancing through the cedars which grew upon the Tabor. They came from the borders of the Ganges, of the Rhine, of the Niger, and the Nile: as a numerous flock of sheep and of young lambs separate and graze upon the side of an extensive hill, abounding with spring grass, so did these souls appear amid the groves of Tabor. The Judge did not pronounce sentence upon them: they were led by gentle and imperceptible transitions from planet to planet, till, having reach'd the term of celestial adolescence, they were prepar'd to take a higher flight. They saw and learnt much during their journey, and enjoy'd many hours of delightful recreation; and I thought, that during one of these seasons devoted to joy and raptnre, I heard, accompanied by a fine-toned harp, these sounds, The soul of an infant will be led into one of these peaceful retreats; and while sporting amidst its flowery fields, it will meet with the soul of the only friend who remain'd faithful to Elisama, that of his dog, who lick'd the hand of his dead master, and expir'd of grief while so doing. The soul of this faithful animal attaches itself to that of the child, follows it, and will not leave it: nor is he inclin'd to drive him back: nevertheless they must part when the child rises to a higher degree of felicity; but other newly arriv'd spirits will attract its regard, and with them it will continue to sport in these flowery meads.

The soul of Geltor, awaken'd to rapture, rises with a joyful exclamation, and stems the air with its guide. When they had risen far above the moon, and could no longer hear the impetuous thundering motion of the long-tail'd fiery comets, and they had reach'd a more serene firmament, those suns, whose powerful rays are never intercepted by any of those opaque globes which darken most of the planetary systems, several figures

appear'd and surrounded Geltor: they neither resembl'd those images of which a thinking mind forms to itself an idea, nor those that flit before the mind during a deceitful dream: they brought before his eyes all the good and pious actions which he had perform'd during his earthly career. He seems to revive at this sight, as he does not perceive his errors intermingl'd with his virtues. He is therefore impress'd with the rapturous idea, that God thus rewards them: he sees around him many clasped hands, which are rais'd towards Heaven in prayer for him—those of the necessitous, whom he had reliev'd—of the orphans, whom he had, by his care and attention, render'd useful members of society—and those of the wives and friends, and of the crowd of free men, to deliver whom he had shed his blood in battle: and he advanc'd in the midst of this host, bless'd by their cries of joy, and by the excess of gratitude display'd upon their smiling countenances.

Many times did the sun rise and set during the period that the Saviour of mankind continued to sit in judgment upon the spirits of the deceas'd, who incessantly appear'd before him. Their approach might be compar'd to showers proceeding from the effects of a storm, which sometimes pours down in torrents, at others, fall drop by drop, and are lost amid arid deserts, or in the murmuring rivulets which water the cultivated plains: and the spirits were either plung'd into despair, or were dilated with rapture, according as the decisive scales of fate rose or fell (15).

Hagid and Syrmion had drawn their swords against each other: both are bath'd in blood: they stagger and expire, reciprocally animated against each other. As they ascend amidst the most opaque gloom, they hear the dismal clashing of the chains of adamant, which a cherubim had dispatch'd towards them by an infernal spirit, who angrily assails them, and chains them togegether; and the caverns of hell resounded with their fall!

Toa, a youthful inhabitant of one of those globes which were the resting-place of the Divinity, from whence Sin and Death were banish'd, regards with astonishment an angel who seem'd afflicted at leaving him; but soon his astonishment changes into terror. Toa had complain'd of the Creator and of the Mediator, for not having spar'd those who were destin'd to rise from their graves, the sufferings of their previous decease. He had began by murmuring, and had finish'd by rebelling. Terrified at he knew not what, he cast a hasty look around him, and perceiv'd several solemnizing choirs, crown'd with early flowers, who, render'd enthusiasts by the inspiration of celestial harmony, and animated by the enjoyment of a succession of delights, sang the glory of God in the labyrinth of bliss. Toa descended near them, that he might be able to converse with them respecting his troubles; but a stop was speedily put to his progress. Another angel made him a sign, which obliges him to follow, and he is surpris'd to find himself hovering in the rear. After a short interval he discerns at a distance the luminous globe which was his native country: it appears to resemble the other planets, and he sees it, with increasing astonishment, disappear behind a sun.

Angel of the Lord, Whither art thou leading me? he exclaim'd.

The angel made no reply.—Angel of the Lord, of what did I complain? The angel continu'd silent; and the brilliant colour in his cheeks seems to fade. Angel of God, oh! deign to succour me!—I am unable, was the reply; and they continu'd their flight, as if carried upon the wings of a whirlwind, both, for a length of time, remaining silent. At last Toa exclaim'd—

Who order'd thee to carry me thus away?—The Supreme Judge.

They now perceiv'd the terrestrial globe; and though still at a distance, they remark'd its newly fill'd graves. Ah! there are the receptacles of the dead, cried Toa.—It is there that the seed accumulates, replied the angel.

—And what is that eminence, near those houses, upon which are those bloody crosses? asked Toa.—It is Golgotha.—Golgotha? Seraphim, I discern many mortals there, but where is he who gave them life?—Thou mayst perceive the refu'gent light by which he is surrounded: those who are near him thou already knowest to be my fellows.

Ah! I perceive amidst the host of cherubims, the Ruler of the heavens!—Yes, you now see the Judge of every world!—And, wretch that I am! he is also mine! Is it towards him that you are leading me?—Make haste! was the reply; and having descended towards Earth, they hover'd towards the Tabor.

Toa, surrounded by a host of spirits, at last reaches the seat of judgment, and of the second transfiguration of the Mediator: thus, during the fury of a storm, the already ripe fruit is shook from the tree, along with the faded bud and the fresher flowers. When Toa found himself among these spirits, upon this terrible mountain, he would very fain have sought his safety in flight; but an invisible power detains his steps, and he appears before the Judge. Several cherubims advance: so this holy assembly might be compar'd to the serenity of a summer's sky previous to the approach of a tempest; but as that carries death and destruction along with it, so did the cherubims prefer their accusations against Toa. When they had all spoken, the radiant Eloa, whose eyes were fix'd upon the Saviour, merely emitted a feeble light. The angels, the risen from the dead, Toa, and the spirits, all tremble. Suddenly Toa is convuls'd: he turns pale, rends the air with his screams, faints, and dies. The mighty arm of the All-powerful soon crumbles his body into dust, which he instantly delivers to the wind, by whom it was immediately dispersed far and near; and, alas! no etherial body was created to shroud the spirit of the deceas'd. It remain'd alone, forsaken by every being in existence, and banish'd from every sphere in the creation. It no longer wanders either in this land of mortality, nor is

it suffer'd to seek a refuge in its own: it no longer discerns any immortals: plung'd in the deepest sorrow, it no longer hears any celestial voices. It had retain'd the faculty of thinking, and it was not depriv'd of motion; but in vain did it endeavour to extricate itself from the immensity of void, since its understanding and knowledge seem'd to have been annihilated. It was merely sensible that it still existed to suffer, as it retain'd a perfect recollection of the past. Depriv'd as it was of all friendly intercourse, no one replied to his anxious inquiry, to learn when the Judge would mitigate his dreadful punishment, though sometimes (without his being aware of it) ideas and thoughts cross'd his mind, which were either the effect of inspiration, or the consequence of his bitter recollections.

One of the proudest of souls was now led among those who were being judg'd by our Saviour. This arrogant criminal had, with the cunning of a serpent, and the claws of a lion, depriv'd his people of the sacred rights of liberty. When the blood of the proscrib'd had ceas'd to flow, and that he had obtain'd entire dominion over the slaves whom he had loaded with chains, he gave a free loose to his natural depravity, and insulted their silent submission to his tyranny by the most bitter raillery. Affecting to consider himself their God, he hardly suffer'd them to enjoy the privileges of being men. But at last, the worm which never dies began to feast upon the corpse of this self-created divinity. As they drew near the Judge, the conductor of this soul, who was a young immortal, again said in an authoritative tone, Follow me! but having rather recover'd from the terror of death, it stopp'd its flight. The seraphim notic'd his action, and his cheeks, suffus'd with a deeper glow of fire, seem'd to emit rays similar to those which proceed from Sirius, while we are under his dominion. The deceas'd still linger'd behind. The celestial lightly turning round, suffer'd his breath to reach the sinner, who now follow'd him as chaff flies before the wind, or as the waves, when agitated by a

storm, throw up a white froth! As a last resource, the criminal endeavour'd to laugh as in derision; but it soon became a mere convulsive movement; and his seraphic guide threw him, in this state, in the dust, at the feet of the Judge.

The Divine Saviour inquires, Spirit, who art thou? The deceas'd rose, saying, If you are one of the Gods of heaven, learn that I am one of the gods of the earth, and that one God does not pay obedience to another. The Messiah turn'd towards the multitude who surrounds him, and his eyes rested upon Samed (16). Judge this soul! said he. Instantly the countenance of Samed beam'd with joy, as the first dawn appears in a morning in spring. The soul of the adolescent is convinc'd that he whom the Divine Redeemer has selected to pronounce judgment upon a fellow-creature, may pray with confidence. Falling prostrate, he invokes the Divine aid, and feels inspir'd: he then turns towards the deceas'd, saying, I condemn thee, rebel, to serve the vilest slave in hell: him, who having servilely prostrated himself at the foot of thy throne, privately withdrew to gratify his tyrannical disposition, by heaping still greater miseries upon the wretches thou hadst subjugated, and by overwhelming the good with every species of misery; may his signs, even when hardly understood, give thee wings, as he will soon accuse thee of negligence, so greatly will thy debasement increase his presumption! Suddenly the condemn'd tyrant grows more heavy; and, bending under his own weight, he sinks into the yawning gulph, where the imperious signs of his slave fix his future station.

Zoar and Seba had long been united by the strictest ties of friendship. By the decrees of Fate they died on the same day, and their souls took flight together towards the supreme tribunal. Seba already anticipated the reward of a crown of glory, and felt the certain expectation of a glorious salvation. Zoar's hope was blended with fear, chasten'd by humility and sincere contrition, as

he felt assur'd that the scales of their Heavenly Judge were not regulated by the standard of men. During their flight, while under the guidance of an immortal, they thus convers'd together.

Oh! Thou who hast bless'd us with eternal life! How favourable hast thou shewn thyself towards us! said Zoar. Since we have been friends during our lives, and are now united after death, those pleasing ties will never be broken asunder. The immortal heard what he said, but remain'd silent. They arrive before the tribunal upon the Tabor. The Judge, by signs, gives his orders to their guide, who, in obedience to his will, retires with the spirits of the friends. Shortly after an angel of death descended from one of the deserted spheres. He advanced slowly, but directly towards them: the exterior and the proceedings of this terrible unknown were convincing proofs that it would be a vain attempt to endeavour to elude him; though as yet there was the space of an ocean between the three newly arriv'd and the angel of death. Zoar had remark'd the precipitation with which their seraphic guide had remov'd them from the august assembly, and from the presence of him who seem'd the superior of all. But when he observ'd the piercing regards of the angel of death fix'd upon them, he was seiz'd with terror: he stopp'd. The angel of death, who had now arriv'd in front of them, rais'd towards heaven his flaming rod.

Thou art receiv'd into favour! and thou! he proceeded, in a tone of thunder, turning towards Seba, art rejected. When this last was sufficiently recover'd from the shock he had undergone to understand, the exterminator thus proceeded: Ye must part!

Oh! heaven! earth! and all that is sacred! exclaim'd Seba: men! angels! and all ye immortal beings! rejected! separated! me rejected! Hast thou, excommunicator, pronounc'd this dreadful sentence, Ye must part! Most powerful of the powerful, who art thou? Oh, Seba! my well-beloved Seba! cried Zoar: my

chosen friend, whom I selected from among all my companions! who has long been dearer to me than myself! long my best and most approv'd friend!

My dear Zoar! is the dreadful sentence which thou hast pronounc'd, and which is above my comprehension, definitive?

The angel of death, whom he address'd, thus replied (and the resplendent brightness of their guide seem'd to fade as he spoke): Thou inquirest whether my sentence is definitive? Oh! do not interrogate me: put the question to the seraphim who has been your guide: he comes from the Judge of heaven and earth!

Was he, then, who shone far superior to all the angels? asked Seba, was he then the Judge of the world? Did he order my reprobation, and this heart-rending separation? Angel! oh thou who hast been the guide of my Zoar and me! angel of God! is our separation to be eternal?

The guide, veiling his effulgence in a thick mist, replied, We merely obey the order of Him who directs every thing; do thou also obey, by immediately separating from thy friend!

His orders! He! cried Seba, who did not even deign to honour me with a regard! He certainly decided the fate of many others; but he did not even look at me!

Yes! he cast one look upon thee, replied Zoar, which appear'd to me very severe.

Dost thou bear witness against me, thou my friend, and at such a dreadful moment, upon the brink of such a precipice?

Alas! I do not wish to add to thy affliction; but thou knowest I never could disguise the truth: Seba, embrace thy faithful friend.

The angel of death had turn'd from them, and had lower'd his flaming hand towards the earth, having weaken'd its threatening fire: therefore Zoar was enabled to embrace Seba: both shed tears of blood. But the moment that was to separate them was arriv'd: that terrible, grievous, and sad moment, when the destroying

angel was to raise his torch, and to arm it anew with all its pristine terrors. He shook it into a blaze, cast a look around, and cried, in an inexorable voice, Ye part for ever! and they obey'd his orders.

Cerda, a young man who was very anxious in the pursuit of knowledge, was upon his death-bed: he enjoy'd what might be term'd the favour of a double blessing—the having retain'd his presence of mind, and having the certainty of his approaching dissolution, since the ardent hope he entertain'd of becoming a partaker of the joys of heaven, inspir'd him with such inward satisfaction, that he communicated it to all those who approach'd him, either friends or enemies, by the pressure of his hand, and repeatedly embracing them. When he was dead, his angelic guide, before he led him towards his Judge and Mediator, ventur'd to make him acquainted with the height, the depth, and the extent of the heavens. Oh death, thou gift of God! he cried, while he took his flight amidst the circle of worlds, and starts when he discovers the extent of what had once been chaos. He sees the stars of God at a distance, and near at hand: he hears them move: he also discerns the stars of the Milky Way, with their inhabitants, which can neither be nam'd nor calculated. But soon he is surrounded by hosts of celestials, who were celebrating the feast of the creation. This consummation of bliss overpower'd him: he sunk, exhausted by rapture, in a blissful swoon, upon a roseate cloud, near a water-fall. He appear'd to slumber: his paleness gave way to the most vivid brightness, and he seem'd to expire a second time.

Crowds of spirits were now brought forward: these cries resounded from amidst the immense multitude—God of thunder! who, from the summit of Olympus, dost shake this earth, even unto its foundations! we had led bulls, crown'd with the finest flowers to thy altars! we have also brought thee rams, loaded with garlands! What, therefore, have we poor mortals omitted to obtain thy blessing? Do not be offended with us, Father

of all the Gods! neither do you, ye minor Divinities, who surround his person! Suffer us also to implore thy clemency, oh Thou, who bearest the fatal urn: thou hast hidden it, conceal'd it somewhere amid the gloom: do not, Minos, suffer any fatal lots to escape from it: Hide it, oh hide it for ever!—Brama!——we have then— (17) — Minos! ah! keep back those fatal lots! Chain'd, lacerated, and expos'd to the ardent rays of the sun, we have fainted, Brama, while displaying our zeal! Oh! Divinity of the groves! Woden! (18) why shouldst thou be angry with us? and thou, Father of all! thou requirest blood, Mars! and the blood of our youths has flow'd in battle in honour of thee!—Chain'd, lacerated, and wither'd in the sun, Brama!—We did not die the death of cowards, we fell in battle!—Hide! oh hide that fatal urn, Minos! break it, and scatter the cruel lots in the void of chaos!—We died in battle of deep and inflam'd wounds! we are—They were crown'd with flowers, and the rams were decorated with garlands!—Do not raise thy right hand, Jupiter! do not call forth thy thunder! Jupiter! Saturn! have mercy upon us! suffer thy thunderbolts to repose! We died for our liberty, for our friends, and our wives! Such were the exclamations of this crowd of spirits, who had all reason to bless the clemency of their Judge.

Jesus, now turning round, said, Angel of the earth, follow me. Eloa obey'd his orders. Instantly the whole extent of the creation open'd to afford them a passage: the immensity of space re-echoes with the sound: the stars shed a brilliant lustre around, as they rise from the depth of the seas, and from behind the mountains. The All-powerful, in his rapid course, lightly touches the poles of heaven, which are gently shaken. As soon as Abdiel heard them from afar, and discover'd the Messiah, he rush'd joyfully through the space between the created worlds, and, precipitately approaching the gates of hell, he loudly announces him to their second keeper (19): a vague rumour succeeds, which jars the bolts and hinges, even of the eternal

grave. The rejected conceiv'd the seraphim to be encompass'd by a whirlwind of flames, and the noise of his approach seem'd to them like that of a thundering car, plac'd upon a thousand wheels, which was rolling along the descent with a tremendous noise.

Jesus descended into hell, whose gates had open'd at his approach. The keepers had fallen prostrate upon the steps; and, rising, they follow him with their eyes, adoring the divinity of the Judge of the world: they see him descend into the gulph of gulphs, and on every side the demons, petrified, like unto the surrounding rocks. With an impetuous flight the first of the angels of death overtook the Messiah: his effulgence, and that of his flaming sword, falls behind him. The Supreme Father had sent him to hell, that he might relate to the heavens what he might witness there. Jesus approach'd the throne, which, rising above the temple, pil'd up by the (20) hated of God, and by Satan, casts a terrible shade over it. The countenance of the approaching Mediator, now victorious over death and sin, was irradiated by supreme majesty, and by that heavenly calm which proclaim'd his celestial origin. An Eden grew under his feet, which became again hell as he left it behind him. Soon the mighty in arms has reach'd the highest bank of the river of death, but he remains silent. All the demons wish'd to fly; but flight was forbidden them. Ah! let us die, said they; but no mode of death presented itself as in pity to them. Eloa, who was by the side of the Messiah, being rais'd to the highest degree of expectation, cast his piercing looks around. With a rapidity, with which the thoughts of angels can alone keep pace, the throne of Hell was broken, and fell in ruins: from these scatter'd ruins arose smoke and flames, which strike, rush forth, and extend on every side of Pandemonium: echo resounds, thousands of thousand times with the noise: the whole temple sinks, and no ruins remain to mark where it once stood. Eloa now remarks a look of the Messiah's, which induces him to fall prostrate at his side, being

now fully convinc'd of his very limited powers as a being. The screams of the demons degenerate into a hollow roaring: there rises with the waves of the sea, even to the most exalted bank, a gloomy echo, which repeats these words: Oh! what has befallen me? what has befallen thee? and yet I exist! for my misfortune I still live! Art thou also alive? why does his thunder pause? it will soon overwhelm us. It will soon overwhelm us; crush'd, and destroy'd, with all hell, and the weight of its mountains will soon—

Satan now imperfectly utter'd, in trembling haste, Oh! tell me, roar it to me, what has, oh! what has befallen you? I am o'erthrown, extended amid this general desolation, and now lie benumb'd in the deepest gulph!

In the now desert field, where the temple of the golden table, now destroy'd, had once stood, Adramelech remain'd: his voice overpower'd that of all the rest: Here am I, overthrown! Oh! misery of miseries! Oh thou, Judgment, before whom even the thunder of God is hush'd! I am benumb'd! a burthen even to hell! a skeleton!

The angel of the earth drew back in trembling, upon perceiving the dreadful delusion under which they labour'd. The spirits of the rejected, among whom were those of Philo and of Iscariot, reach'd the sea of death, forc'd forwards, as clouds are driven before the winds. They have now lost sight of the Judge; but on the other bank, in all the vast extent of a field of horror, they perceiv'd a multitude of skeletons, of phantoms, of angels, and, amongst them, Abaddona, in his former figure; though he, like them, only perceives skeletons around him. The illusion had become general in hell. The spirits and the rebellious angels had merely been spared, more or less, the horrid sensation which must have pervaded them, at the moment of their transformation. A sparkling mass of heat, in its meridian ardour, now shows itself above the sea of death, in a much more hideous manner than it had formerly done.

This sea was swoln by black globes, which were form'd by its own essence; and their explosion produc'd an ardent blaze: whirlwinds of flames also exhaled from these globes; and this field of horrors seem'd to emit a paler light every succeeding minute. As far as the eye could discern these sepulchral figures, and even at the lesser distance, which separated some spirits from the others, none of them could be recogniz'd, except by their roaring. Their hoarse voices still mingl'd, as formerly, with the dismal breaking of the waves; and resembled the falling of rocks, though the sound had acquir'd more shrillness, owing to the pain, anger, and fright which interrupted these complaints.

Satan was the first among them to rise, and, being plac'd much above the others, he struck his head with his hand, with such frightful violence, that the ruins of the throne resounded with the blow: his shriek resembled the crash of a falling rock, which had long totter'd in the bosom of the clouds, to the terror of the flying pilgrim; or it might be compar'd to the bursting of a bank which had long restrain'd a foaming torrent, when it resounds amid the echoes of a forest.

His cruel grief vents itself in these words: Ah! I know why you are thus transform'd: it is because you have assassinated him, nail'd him to a cross! that is the reason, ye infamous wretches! that is the reason, ye skeletons! ye execrable beings, sprung from corruption tir'd of its prey! Monsters! may the thunder of God disperse you! and may the quaking of hell reunite you! May the tempest scatter you abroad! and may the raging sea drive you back with its waves towards the jarring storm. Thus did he express his fury and his suffering, as he wav'd the flames which encompass'd his head. The sorrow of Belial exhales itself in groans, amidst the desert of lamentations. Did you perceive, said he, (oh, celestial Eden! I caught another transient glimpse of you!) that flowers grew before him, which faded and died as soon as he was gone by? Ah! we are for ever wither'd! but we shall never die! Oh! must

we always thus exist? While speaking, he wish'd that fresh gulphs might open under him, and that they might become his grave!

At last Adramelech also regain'd his upright posture, to the terror of all the proud; for his strength failing him, in the first instance, he fell back so heavily, that they heard his bones break, and a cloud of thick and black cinders arose in consequence of his fall. Nevertheless Moloch, the demon of war, strove to rise: he seated himself, leaning upon his right hand, and said to Magog, My skeleton is enervated by the storm: the hurricane whistles in my ears; but I will—I will raise myself: may Adramelech remain extended! He succeeds at last, and, grasping hold of Magog with all his strength, he also raises him. They stop, and then walk forward, while Magog exclaims, What a hideous body! admitting it to be a body: let us destroy each other: do thou break my bones, and I will break thine! these tempestuous hurricanes will disperse our remains. They instantly seize each other, and endeavour to break each other's bones; but they vied, in point of substance, with the hardest rocks of Orion: they cast themselves from the summit of mountains, higher than the highest towers; still their bones remain'd entire, and seem'd to have been petrified in the caverns of the seven stars. They were constrain'd to remain extended, motionless, and dumb, at the bottom of the gulph into which they had thrown themselves. As mountains, loaded with vapours, spout foaming streams, so did Gog express his rage, who, though his reason had convinc'd him of his error, he shut the eyes of his mind against conviction; and such was his insanity, that he still endeavour'd to deny the existence of God: he roars, and howls his imprecations: annihilation is the end he has in view: he thinks to seize it with his cadaverous claws, to hasten it by his groans; and, nevertheless, he still exists!

Thus was it prov'd in the very depths of hell, who he was who had died upon Mount Calvary; and the

fresh punishment they underwent was a terrible warning to them not to accumulate revolt upon revolt against the last judgment of the Messiah.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XVII.

The Argument.

Thomas, who continues incredulous, again returns to the assembly of the apostles; but he is soon convinced of the truth of the resurrection, by the appearance of Jesus amongst them. The Messiah descends with the angel Gabriel, to the abode where those sinners were detained who perished during the deluge: he delivers a great number of them. Nepthoa seeks the disciples near the sepulchre of Jesus: he dances the sacred round with other children. Others of the newly risen join in the dance, singing hymns. Lazarus assembles at his house his friends, and some pilgrims who were come to celebrate the feast, to partake of a repast in his garden: at which also appear as pilgrims, some of the risen, such as Dimnot, Kerdith, and Japhet. Lazarus holds converse with his guests, respecting the sufferings of the Messiah. He then visits the tomb of his sister Mary, who, from her blessed abode, sees her brother, and several of her celestial companions, amongst the mortals. The centurion Cneus, the rich man who would not abandon his wealth to follow Jesus Christ, and the grateful leper, are gratified by the appearance of some of the risen.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XVII.

AFTER a long separation from his brethren, the apostle Didymus return'd to the house beneath the temple's shade. But his pace was slow, and he did not enter, but walk'd to and fro before the door under the palm trees. Having walk'd for some time, he lean'd against one of the trees: soon after he heard the sound of singing. This induc'd him to draw near, and to stop before the door. The faithful were singing a hymn in honour of the resurrection; one of those newly compos'd hymns which the souls of the martyrs sing before the heavenly throne.

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead! He will reanimate all those who believe in him! His children will not always remain bury'd in the bosom of the earth, and disfigur'd by the hand of corruption! The voice which pronounces this blessing will be heard; and the curse impos'd upon mortality will die away at the sound! The archangels will rejoice, and their beams will be more resplendent! Such will be their delightful sensation when they perceive the reanimation of the dead.—Ah! they will cry, the grave no longer devours; the empire of corruption is destroy'd; the worthy companion of the soul is no longer in the grave, a prey to destruction!—Blow, ye easterly winds! and bring with you the dust of dissolution; bring, ye troubled westerly winds! the dismember'd dust; roar, ye northern winds! and bring with you the bodies of the deceas'd: Jesus

Christ is risen from the dead!—Our return to the life of angels (1) will appear to us as the awakening from a dream!—Ye winds from the south, blow those who dy'd believing in God to the newly created Paradise, at the gate of the never-fading Eden! No silent cherubim, arm'd with a flaming sword, forbids our entrance; we shall be seated at the table of the Son, under the shade of the trees of life, surrounded, during the feast, by that gentle breeze which proclaims the presence of God!—Such are the first fruits of the merits of him who is risen from the dead: who display'd his love for his people in dying, and who expiated their sins upon the cross!

Thomas, having listen'd to this canticle, had fall'n upon the step of the door, and cover'd his face. The tears flow'd from his eyes as the blood flows from the wounds of him, who, without hopes of life, lies extended upon the field of battle, when he hears the cry of victory, the forerunner of that liberty for which he has been fighting. Thomas cannot as yet rise from his humble posture; the chilly dews of night fall upon his exhausted frame; he was dead to all sensation of corporeal inconvenience, and could only weep and lament: indeed, his tears flow'd so rapidly that they almost overwhelm'd his soul! Suddenly he resumes his former vigour, and hastily rising, he joins the assembly. They again see Thomas their brother, whom they advance to meet, greeting him with the happy assurance of everlasting life. He listen'd to them in silence; but the cruel chill of sorrow again oppresses his soul with its heavy weight; and he exclaims—If I do not see the marks of the nails in his hands, if I do not put my fingers in his wounds, and if I do not put my hand into his side, I cannot believe what you assert. Those who heard him thus avow his incredulity were pale and red by turns. But soon they heard the waving of the cherubims' (2) wings, under the palm trees before the house; soon did tears of joy stream from their eyes; and soon the most merciful Redeemer again extends his mercy towards them, by appearing like a Divinity amongst them.

Thus do Christians, after having sunk under the pangs of death, derive their felicity after their decease, from the first great source of light.

Thus did Thomas rush forward, and fall prostrate at the feet of our Saviour.

The divine Son thus saluted them, with that loving-kindness which is his particular attribute:

Peace be with you!—Then turning towards Thomas —Put thy finger here, and look at my hands; place thy hand upon my side, and, in ceasing to be an unbeliever, become one of the faithful.

The fresh witness of the resurrection exclaim'd—My Lord and my God!

The eternal Mediator then said to him, Thou dost believe, Thomas, because thou hast seen: happy those who believe without having seen!

The Lord and God of his faithful followers then disappear'd from before the eyes of these his first witnesses. Thomas continu'd to invoke him; and when he rose, he advanc'd towards the disciples, and his other brethren, and solicits forgiveness of his fault. His friends had long since forgiven it him; and he, as the most fortunate, discourses with them respecting martyrdom, as the most felicitous termination of their career. They were no less eager to seal their belief with their blood, which would insure to them the crown of victory: but soon their discourse of Heaven insensibly became a hymn.

We salute you in the distance of futurity, holy society of the Mediator! May ye be blessed, oh brethren! by the blessing of his death and resurrection! You who are only fated to see the Divinity after your demise, and not during this life of trial, and who shall nevertheless believe in him, walk in the road to Heaven, and form here a society, who will incline to die a holy death, and be thus fitted to appear in the presence of God; may your example prepare many others for the enjoyment of eternity! Some of you, alas! will pursue your way amidst troubles and persecutions. But call upon your Saviour, and he will fortify your minds, and enable you to wrestle

in the fight with due perseverance; as for us, the world will despise us, and will deprive us of our lives; you will only be despis'd. But he, who from the beginning offer'd himself a sacrifice for you and for us, and who will continue to the end of the world with those he loves, will shorten for you, as for us, this hour of trial.

After the birth of Christ, the angels descended into the prisons (3), in which were detain'd the spirits of those who had not chosen to believe the threats that were held out to them, respecting the promis'd inundation. They had spoken much to these spirits, respecting the salvation which was thus insur'd to mankind by the birth of the Messiah. Gabriel had address'd them in these prophetic terms: Ye spirits who formerly inhabited this earth before his birth, the Son of Man will himself descend into your prisons before he ascends in all his majesty and glory to Heaven. The moment of his coming will be when Gethsemane, which is remote from Heaven, shall tremble, and its palm trees be shaken. Since the birth of Christ, these immortal emissaries had, by this mission, inspir'd a multitude of the spirits of this inferior world with divers thoughts, which vary'd to infinity, till they had acquir'd the certainty of belief. Some only amongst them did not seem inclin'd to give way to the heavenly impulse; for the number of those who wander'd in this labyrinth (but who were not lost to salvation, except they were seduc'd by their own hearts) was immense. The thoughts of these spirits were fully occupied in meditating upon the future, which even the most enlighten'd minds can only view through a gloomy veil, and the more they endeavour'd to seek to raise it, the more dark it appears. Their hopes were of that ardent nature which spirits, disengag'd from their bodies, are alone capable of feeling: sometimes their ardent vows were borne even to Heaven; at other times they fancy'd they were rejected. Their hope was mingled with the doubt, that it would never be fulfil'd by their enjoying perfect happiness, as they were not absolutely convinc'd that he, whom the angels announc'd to them as having

become Man, was their divine Redeemer. This occasion'd these revolting efforts against fate or providence, and led to the afflictive doubt, that even this promis'd deliverance might not extend to them (4), which gave a more gloomy and bitter cast to their grief; then their pride induc'd them to wish that they might take the advance of the elect upon earth, and be the first provided with the finest palms; while their anger induc'd them to murmur at not having an inheritance in the kingdom of the redeem'd, where neither the clouds of darkness nor of uncertainty ever arise. Such were the tormenting reflections which presented themselves to the minds of these spirits of the inferior world, who had long been try'd and punish'd. From their deepnesses they had frequently dispatch'd many from amongst them, who were to go and examine Gethsemane and her surrounding palms, and to return with their prophetical report of its state. Gethsemane trembles, they cry; some of the companions of this planet falter; several of them cry'd from gulph to gulph, The time approaches; and the echoes of the deep repeat the cry! Some of the parties separated; the one fill'd their cups to the brim, from the burning and troubled lake; they rose—sought to find a road—miss'd their aim, till at last, finding an issue, they return'd, crying—The planet does not yet tremble. Another body, who had also found an issue, did not return: raising a clamour of joy, this body was follow'd by a multitude. Thus does the ocean heave during a tempest: at first the waves merely experience a gentle swell; but soon, with a roaring noise, they become mountainous billows, which break upon the strand. Several of the party had return'd upon perceiving that the stars held their accustom'd course: nevertheless an infinite number of the deceas'd remain'd stationary upon the banks of the burning and troubled lake, anxious to draw consolation from a purer source: others arrive in haste, to see whether he, whom the angels announc'd, is coming—whether the Mediator is ready to burst upon their dazzled sight.

Jesus said to Gabriel, Precede me.—The seraphim, having taken flight, was suddenly surrounded by rays deriv'd from the source of all light; and more resplendent than he had ever before been, he descends into the inferior prisons.

Gethsemane was now shaken with greater violence every succeeding minute, till at last the observing multitude perceives that the agitation of its pole forces the planet to quit its orbit; and such is their anxiety to announce the news, that they hardly see the seraphim, though he stood before them in all his majesty. The Saviour at last appears, and a brighter day succeeds the arrival of the Divinity: it enlightens the deepest caverns; shines upon the declivity of those rocks which inclose the most stagnant streams, and even penetrates into the lowest vaults beneath the steepest rocks, where several of the deceas'd had hitherto, in slow and sullen murmurs, shaken their chains of adamant; but which they now hastily shook in a transport of joy and of impatience. At first the subterranean assembly were lost in amaze; but this sensation soon gave way to their anxious desire, to learn what would be their fate: to know what destiny had in reserve for them, form'd the only wish of some, whatever might be the decree of the Supreme Judge, so long as they were but rescu'd from the obscurity which had, till this moment, pervaded their abode. Gabriel blew his trumpet; and these words are distinctly heard: We have announc'd the coming of a Saviour to you, from the moment of his birth: he knows all things; he knows what have been your thoughts, from that day to the present time, respecting God and him, not what they are at this moment, when you see him in all his glory, but what their and your desires were when his coming was announc'd to you; and by them shall you be judg'd by the Most Just and Most Merciful.

Now the angels who announc'd the coming of our Saviour to the spirits, surround the Messiah. They appear'd more effulgent than before, in the bright day which had risen for the Divinity. The cherubims stood before them.

They inspir'd some with terror; but were view'd with rapture by the greater number. Thus, awful in their beauty, the angels raise their wings to skim the air, and to examine the deceas'd: they extend to a vast distance in these lower regions: the decisive moment drew near, and the dread of overwhelming thunder seizes the whole assembly. The silence becomes more profound; but soon these mournful abodes resound on every side; here a noisy crowd—there a general clamour, or an interrupted, but earnest, petition for salvation, was heard. The Most Merciful and the Most Just hears in these sounds what no other immortal does: he hears the mental prayers of those souls whose humility kept them at a distance. The angels sent upon this mission bore down among the crowd, and separated the fortunate from the wretched. What a moment of rapture, and of despair, but most of rapture! Where is the harp capable of expressing such feelings?—Oh that I were but capable of touching its strings, admitting it only pour'd forth strains of sorrow; and why did not I learn from the angel himself, who were sav'd among those that wept, or amongst those who, overwhelm'd with despair, murmur'd against providence for being, as they imagin'd, now and forever depriv'd of all inheritance in the empire of light? Those who were thus a prey to despair, and weary'd by the tempest and hurricane in their minds, were inclin'd to revolt against the orders of Providence. At last the separation was completed: the band of the absolv'd rise from the depths in their state of glory, and follow the angels who were their guides. These were provided for their pilgrimage amidst the worlds with light girdles, which seem'd wove by Aurora at her dawn, and they bore in their hands golden wands, which they frequently pointed towards Heaven, as a proof that the pilgrims had greater joys in store than they could meet with while journeying among the planets.

When the last band who were emancipated from these lower regions had quitted their abode a feeble twilight

quickly terminated the first day that had risen for them; involv'd as before in continual darkness, the whole assembly of spirits remain'd profoundly silent during the space of three annual revolutions of the earth; during the fourth, some few came to themselves, and proceeded towards the brilliant stream of hope, from whence they, in trembling, drew some shadow of consolation, and then sought their former companions in the caverns: they found many of their abodes forsaken; this induc'd them to turn from these uninhabited places, bitterly deploring the being depriv'd of a brother, a friend, or of their companions. There is, even upon earth, certain enjoyments, which are for those doom'd to die, a foretaste of their future beatification: but, alas! the most forward flowers are those that the soonest fade. It was thus, nevertheless, that the tree of life flourish'd in Eden.

A soft sleep had weigh'd down the eyelids of Nepthoa after he had pray'd with the greatest confidence. Thus does the dew moisten the buds of spring. Soon in a dream he hears a voice, which thus addresses him; What! dost thou still sleep, and dost not go to tell the faithful that a messenger from Christ has appear'd to thee, an envoy of the most glorious God, a denizen of the celestial abodes?

Nepthoa instantly resolv'd to proceed to the tomb in Golgotha: he conceives that those who belong to Christ ought frequently to visit it. Certainly, said he to himself, they go from Salem to this burying place, to reflect upon it and to remark it, and then retrace their steps frequently to return thither. I shall find some of the faithful upon the road, in the garden, and around the grave. This young and active messenger of Heaven, though of mortal mould, leaves Salem at break of day, and takes the road to Golgotha; and, as he expected, he meets with some of the disciples of the Messiah, returning from the tomb; of whom he inquires, Have you left any disciples in the garden of the resurrection? Let me hope you will soon return thither, and that you will bring some more happy witnesses to repose themselves

under the shade of the palm trees. I have blessed tidings for you and for them.

Some children were diverting themselves near the inclosure of the garden: he selected nine; five of them had, with him, amidst the people, receiv'd the blessing of Jesus, the divine Benefactor of children and infants; the others were the chosen of Nepthoa, who was guided by the wisdom of Christ. It is thus that the angels, under the supreme direction, elect those inheritors of Heaven, whom they resolve to protect here below. The children, having reach'd the open tomb, were struck with its amazing depth, and with the weight and size of the stone which had been remov'd. They shudder'd both with joy and terror during their examination, and then wander'd about in the vicinity, either under the shade of the thick groves, or upon the lawns, now enamell'd with a variety of spring-flowers. Opposite one of the entrances to the tomb, seated upon the softest moss, enjoying the reviving morning breeze, and invigorated by the odoriferous herbs which grew around, were several of the holy men of God. Their countenances were saintly and placid, and tears of rapture stole down their cheeks. These were a happy band (5), destin'd at a future period to preach the resurrection of the Messiah, which they were now joyfully celebrating. Nepthoa consider'd them with veneration, though he was also a celestial messenger, and had even been dispatch'd to them. Several of these righteous men were acquainted with Nepthoa and his companions. This child had not as yet spoken; yet they perceiv'd that his lips were unclosing, to announce the joyful tidings of salvation; and he no longer hesitated to disclose his mission, upon the arrival of another band, who had join'd those he had met on his way. Nepthoa now imparts to him the apparition of Benoni: he relates how he play'd with his golden ringlets, what Benoni had said to him respecting Christ, the risen from the dead, over whom death had no dominion. His auditors felt their joy increas'd, and themselves drawn nearer Heaven.

While under the influence of this holy enthusiasm, this foretaste of the beatification they panted to enjoy, their hearts overflow'd with rapture, in all those varied tunes and modulations which language can convey, and they sung the Conqueror of the Serpent, whose rage could no longer bruise the heel (6). While they join'd in chorus in this hymn, the children danc'd the sacred round (7) to the songs of triumph.—The glittering rainbow rose amid the clouds after the terrible deluge; but the covenant of the resurrection will last to all eternity. While these words were repeated by all present, the children danc'd to the triumphant sounds, and the mothers crown'd their sons with the first flowers of spring. Our tears have ceas'd to flow, since the sacrifice of the Lamb of God has insur'd our salvation, and our everlasting life.—The children, still treading the sacred round, now turn'd towards Golgotha, and their mothers brought them branches of palm trees.

He who dy'd on the cross, but who is still alive, cry'd in his own voice, Mary!—Instantly she fell at the feet of her divine Redeemer, crying, Rabboni!

A new dance interrupted this hymn. Thomas exclaim'd —My Lord and my God! He had seen the marks of the nails in his wounds; had put his hand upon the side of him who had risen from the dead. We shall also be rais'd from the tomb, all of those who dy'd believing in God, even to the utmost extremities of the earth. The children now danc'd round one of the tombs, and threw their crowns upon it; when suddenly the palm branches fell from their hands, and their songs of triumph ceas'd, upon perceiving above the sepulchre some of the risen.

Three of these beatify'd saints presented themselves to their view in all their glory; they appear'd to be borne upon moving clouds, towards these inhabitants of earth: when sufficiently near, Asnath (8), effulgent with light, descended from one of these silvery clouds; next came Deborah, whose clasp'd hands and longing eyes were turn'd towards Heaven. Jedidoth (9), who hover'd at a distance, descended at the extremity of the horizon,

and plac'd himself near Deborah. Isaac was accompany'd by a band of angels, who admir'd in him the handsomest of the risen. The waving hair of Rachel floated in the wind as she conducted Joseph amidst these tempestuous vapours, with an appearance of affection which led every mother to recognize her as a mother. Rapture and surprise were the pervading sentiments in each mortal bosom; but scarcely were they recover'd from their astonishment, ere they were again lost in amaze. Isaiah, Abraham and Job presented themselves before them, and illumin'd every object by their effulgence. Fear again mingles with the delight the mortals experienc'd, since next came John the Baptist, Seth and Abel; next Adam, with Gabriel, appear'd like the meteors of Heaven, illuminating every object with a brighter stream of light. The mortals fell prostrate, and the rock and the surrounding ground seem'd to give way under their feet.

But their fears were all remov'd, from the moment Eve appear'd, more beautiful than ever, surrounded by the favourable light of the dawn, and by the celestial azure of the vault of Heaven: she led the young Benoni. The witnesses now rose, and consider'd these inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven with the most heartfelt satisfaction: soft, but inexpressible, rapture fill'd their souls, and they felt and appreciated the happiness they enjoy'd. Nepthoa hastily approach'd the rock; he had again seiz'd his palm branch; he bore it as he went to meet Benoni, and said, Ah! I know thee, but not thy radiant companions, the messengers of God! He who has blessed thee with this splendor, with this effulgent glory, has also blessed me. I am still, it is true, of terrestrial mould, and this body has still to undergo the ordeal of corruption; but, like you, I adore him who dy'd to save us. Ye were formerly mortals, like me; and ye have, like me, borne the curse of death, till having reach'd you, it cut you down. Suffer me, all ye who are justly glorify'd and beatify'd, that, as one bless'd by Christ, I may venture to approach this awful rock,

that I may have a better view of ye, ye celestial beings!

Eve, turning towards Adam, said to him, With the sincerest joy do I foresee that death will soon mow down this flower!—she then approach'd the child, and led him towards Benoni. Nevertheless, when Nepthoa found himself in the midst of the celestial circle, and that his eyes met the smiles of those around him, a fearful shuddering seiz'd this courageous child. Deborah, veiling herself with a cloud, thus address'd him: Thou hast heard the witnesses of Christ sing; do thou sing us their hymn. He began with a feeble unsteady voice; the harps of the blessed animated his spirits.

The assembly of mortals, who remain'd at a distance from the rock, drew near in their enthusiasm—nay, advanc'd towards the glorify'd of God, and mixing in the radiant circle, they sung: We shall all of us, even from the very extremities of the earth, be one day awaken'd from our last sleep! Soon the beatify'd, and the still living Christians, join in one and the same chorus: all sing the merits of the Son; the celestials in a voice of rejoicing, the mortals in a weaker tone—Praise and honour to the Lord, to the Lion of the tribe of Judah, to the Lamb of Sion, to the first fruits of Jesse! He was cut down at Golgotha; but this first fruit of the harvest soon rose again by the side of the bloody hill. It will one day shade every nation, and comfort them by its divine influence, even unto eternity. No longer were the cries of the reapers heard; the trumpets fell from the hands of the cherubims when Jesus Christ rose from the dead! The voice of the blessed of God was lost in their enthusiasm! their dazzling brightness became less distinct, till they finally disappear'd!

The dwellings of Lazarus and of Martha were situated in shady gardens, which were water'd by a clear stream, which ran, in a serpentine course, along the side of a walk leading to the tomb of Miriam (10). It was from this same tomb that her brother had been recall'd by him who could awaken the dead; but the heavenly

sister still repos'd in the iron-bound sleep of death. The survivors no longer griev'd, since Jesus was risen, and that the happy and heavenly Miriam was only gone to join him. Every morning, at sun-rise, Martha strew'd the tomb of the departed with the finest flowers, which she waters from the streamlet, while her eyes are moisten'd by the soft tears of hope—by the hope of their again meeting, when it shall please God that she shall repose by the side of her sister—when her eyes are like her's, clos'd in the sleep of death, which will render her blind to the beauties of the flowers, and deaf to the soft murmurings of the rivulet; but her soul will then be near that of Miriam. She was returning from the tomb when Lazarus met, and thus address'd her:

Martha, I have sent to invite some of our brethren, some of the reconcil'd, and also some pilgrims from the banks of the river which branches off in seven directions, and from the islands of Greece, with our well-belov'd, the singers at the temple, that they may join their voices in these groves to the sound of harps, and partake of a frugal repast under the shade of these trees, where they may breathe the pure air which the zephyrs waft hither.

Martha departed, to make preparations for the feast. Lazarus, having first water'd the sandy walks, strews them with flowers, and bends the branches of the groves, to render their shade more impervious to the rays of the sun. While thus agreeably occupy'd in embellishing and watering these walks, he had occasion to pass the grave of his sister; but his eyes are no longer moisten'd by afflictive recollections. I shall soon see her again, said he, continuing to gather flowers, even round her grave.

Already were the early friends of Lazarus assembled upon the banks of the rivulet beneath the palm trees, with harps, psalters, cymbals of brass, cornets, and trumpets; but not the one which will on the last day sound like thunder: these only produce the softest sounds. They anticipated the satisfaction they should feel when joining in a chorus, which they hop'd would be heard

in all the neighbouring groves, when the evening star and the silver moon should appear in the firmament. In a short time all those who had been invited made their appearance. They seated themselves in the shady groves, and a soft joy fill'd their bosoms, not of that nature which violently affects the soul: the sensation they experienc'd seem'd to steal gently through every vein. What had they not heard related by the witnesses of the resurrection of the Messiah! What had they not heard themselves! and what were they not yet to hear and see, these sons of that sublime covenant, which being founded upon the death and resurrection of our Saviour, was to insure them, even during this life, happy days, and a serene evening at the close! Even the future did not present itself to the minds of the generality with a sinister aspect, as they were not terrify'd at the idea of the sleep of death. No distressing doubts troubled their souls; they were no longer weigh'd down by that dread of uncertainty which, in the time of affliction, is felt even by the faithful; since, when they suffer'd their thoughts to extend beyond the grave into the regions of eternity, they might have envy'd their deceas'd brethren, if a Christian could envy another the enjoyment of a greater portion of the favour of the Sovereign Compensator. The moon had now risen in all its lustre, and the star, its constant companion, already glitter'd in the azure firmament. The assembly of the faithful, having satisfy'd their appetites, dispers'd themselves amongst the neighbouring groves, to enjoy the cool of the evening.

One subject of discourse was follow'd by another. Dimnoth, a pilgrim from Samos, conversing with one of the guests whom he had selected from among the others, and towards whom he felt himself attracted in a singular manner, said, in the overflowing of his noble heart, Thou still thinkest that death annihilates; but must not the seed swell before it can produce a productive shoot? Must not the clouds be condens'd in darkness before they can display the forked lightnings, and resound with the voice of God in his thunder? Is our sublime

soul then always to inhabit this mortal body, always to remain fix'd in this, its first state of existence?—His discourse was brief, and his action prompt: for suddenly he presented himself radiant with glory before his friend, and by a shake, awakens him from his uneasy dream, respecting this dreaded annihilation.

Kerdith, a pilgrim from the Nile, talking with him who seem'd to feel the greatest regard for him, said in the overflowing of his grateful heart, Fortunate mortal, thou art not yet aware of thy happiness; art thou still under the dominion of the idea, that there is more evil than good here below? if so, rejoice; for this afflicting thought will soon vanish from my mind. Thou fortunate being, though thou dost not know how near thou art to the enjoyment of what, even in this perishable state, will elevate thee above the grave, the summons of death, so formidable to many, will be to thee a heavenly sound; the certainty of approaching dissolution will merely present to thee an anticipation of the glorious future, when from thy dead body thy soul will rise to life everlasting.—As for me, brother, by him who created every thing, and who has reconcil'd every thing, in me the resurrection has already taken place.—His joy render'd these last words hardly intelligible, while he appear'd as radiant as Aurora at her first dawn, before the astonish'd mortal; nor does he hasten to turn away his luminous countenance, as he remains for some time before him in the fulness of angelic beauty—nay, asks several questions of his trembling and silent, though joyful auditor, who stagger'd over the flowers that he crush'd under his feet. Nevertheless, Kerdith, more radiant than ever, remain'd near the fallen son of mortality. At last the eyes of the latter, dimm'd by the tears which prov'd his excess of joy, no longer distinguish his celestial friend. They found him extended upon the ground, with pale and livid cheek, and sunk and heavy eyes: they raise him, and endeavour to restore him to animation.

Sebida, whose eyes, though pensive, were piercing, was seated upon a stone cover'd with moss; his forehead

seem'd to burn, so intense were his reflections. Me, said he, who have so long refus'd to believe in the certainty of whatever concerns our future state: who have long allow'd my heart to doubt, however great my sufferings may have been in so doing, I ought to believe that some of the pilgrims, whom I have seen here under the appearance of mortals, are risen from the dead, and have appear'd to mortal eyes; but ought not I sooner to suspect that these credulous and inflam'd souls, whose thoughts merely dwell upon the resurrection, are deceiv'd by an illusion, which to them bears the stamp of conviction?—Appear, therefore, ye risen from the dead, to an able searcher of hearts, who knows how to distinguish the being from his image; shew yourselves, ye that are dead, alive; for I can distinguish reality, and what is life. But I look round me, and implore in vain.

Japhet (11), a pilgrim from Tenedos, approaches the unbeliever. The moon, unobscur'd by clouds, shed its full lustre upon him; he enter'd into conversation with Sebida, respecting the illusion of imaginary belief, and the illusion which led to the entertaining scrupulous doubts, which both depend wholly upon the disposition in which the soul is, either fully open to conviction, or resolv'd to disbelieve even the most self-evident truths. The wisest men are those, said he, who select proper objects for their meditations, and weigh well every circumstance as they present themselves to their minds, or as they fall within their cognizance; and if, amid the extensive sphere of their knowledge, higher subjects seem to demand their attention, they weigh them with the greatest attention and the strictest impartiality, that they may not consider serious matters in a mistaken nor a superficial manner, nor yet suffer themselves to be deceiv'd by their too scrupulous doubts. The quiet pilgrim, having thus gravely deliver'd his opinion, disappear'd. Sebida instantly exclaim'd, He has disappear'd!—Did he then only appear to me?—No doubt he did; but not in his glory. My sight is certainly as good as ever: I see as well as ever I did, and yet he seems to

have disappear'd. If so, he must have appear'd to me! —Who sent him? did he come of his own accord, or was he sent by God?—Admitting he came of his own accord, he must be one of those who knew how much I requir'd instruction, and he has told me some important truths. But supposing him to be a messenger from the Almighty, I have escap'd from that sea of uncertainty in which I was so near being ingulph'd: a tempest has cast me on shore: I have recover'd my feet, and can now look down from the height I have attain'd, with real joy; I hear the waves roaring with the sound of death, and I no longer dread their fury.

But Sebida was still more gratify'd: the deceas'd, who had disappear'd, return'd in all his glory. He perceiv'd his radiance beaming through the branches of the palm trees, and saw him, while skimming the air, draw near him; and at last, softening his effulgence, he stopp'd opposite him, and, as if wishing to repose himself, seated himself upon a stone. Free as the ambient air, and deliver'd from the heavy chains of doubt, and from every unpleasant sensation, Sebida now question'd the celestial apparition; he is delighted by the gentle accents in which it replies to his questions, respecting many objects connected both with this and his future state of existence, and the sublime end which God had in view in all he had done. At last Sebida exclaim'd—But who art thou, celestial apparition, who hast descended from Heaven, as well as risen from the grave?—I am Joseph; thy aged father still lives; go and tell him what has pass'd between us, that the worthy old man may shed tears of joy over his son, and that he may give him his blessing.

Meanwhile the Saviour still contin'd upon the summit of the Tabor, passing judgment upon the actions of the deceas'd, and weighing their intentions in the scales of justice. He saw from thence the happiness which those enjoy'd who were the guests of Lazarus; who discours'd with suitable gravity, but with the most irresistible eloquence, respecting the doctrine of the Messiah, unfolding its profound wisdom, dwelling upon

its amiable simplicity, by which it afforded nourishment and support even to the weakest minds, and gently touching upon that future, hidden as yet from mortal eyes. But, said Lazarus, as soon as the pilgrims, who are anxious in their search after knowledge, have pass'd the limits of the grave, futurity is unveil'd to them, and they there learn why they were suffer'd to remain in ignorance of what they had been so anxious to fathom.

Lazarus was surrounded by many people, who continu'd to question him, and he had in part reply'd to their interrogations. As for what respects the humiliation of our Mediator, said he to one of the pilgrims, who was already immortal, it is a mysterious gulph, into which the most piercing eye cannot penetrate, before which the greatest actions become imperceptible, as being remov'd to too great a distance from our eyes. Therefore let us only talk respecting divine matters, as accords with our human capacity, and the depth of our understanding. An honest man is influenc'd by his principles, and is often misunderstood; his heart will deeply feel and suffer to find itself thus mistaken. Well! and what is he? Why, a weak mortal, rather better than his fellow creatures, who laments, and with difficulty restrains, the bitter tears which he thinks have been justly excited. But dare we speak of the sufferings of Christ? is not that wading out of our depth? Let us compare—but what comparison can be drawn?—else I ought to remain silent. The Mediator is the Son of God, is God himself. Here the image fades before the truth. Do we speak of actions? all are in the shade by the side of his. Has he been misunderstood?—Yes, in every respect; and how many tears has the Saviour with difficulty restrain'd! Could any have been shed with greater justice?—But the most elevated deed that we mortals can form of his feelings are far beneath those with which he endur'd his sufferings—far beneath the real sufferings of the Most Holy. He was more than superficially misunderstood: gifted with far more levity and more acute feelings than any men or angels ever were, he was ex-

pos'd to the most infernal contempt. He was cloth'd in purple amidst the hisses of the most venomous tongues; a reed was plac'd in his right hand for a sceptre, a crown of thorns was plac'd upon his head; thus was he led towards that ignominious eminence, and there nail'd upon the cross! He ask'd for a cordial, and they presented him with gall and vinegar; and thus he perish'd by a lingering death!

Having ceas'd speaking, Lazarus left the grove, and as he walk'd forward alone, he soon reach'd the grave of the pious Mary. He seated himself upon it, and leant his head, now fill'd with the most pleasing and gratifying ideas, against it. Here! said he, 'tis here that she is ripening for the resurrection! Thou only heardst of the death of the Messiah in thy dying moments, and not of his having risen from the dead; but now thou know'st all, and thou art (or the angels have deceiv'd me) thou art with him. Suffer my blessing to follow thee, oh thou who art fall'n asleep in the bosom of the Lord!—The immortal was near her grave, and thus mentally address'd him: What should I not have to relate to you, if, like those other saints, I was permitted to discover myself to thee! but perhaps, like his dear Semida and Cidli, he will undergo a transformation.—Oh! happy evening, exclaim'd Lazarus, which God has granted me in this my second life—oh, happy evening, how solemn do these pilgrims of the Lord contribute to render it! How would Mary have enjoy'd it, were she still living! how she would examine which were the real pilgrims, and which the immortals from the heavenly abodes!—Why cannot I appear to thee? mentally rejoin'd Mary. I would discover them all to thee, my dear friend, as well those who still linger amidst this fragile dust, as those who are only mortals in appearance. There is a majesty about the immortals, Lazarus, which they cannot always conceal. They sometimes, like the angels, fix their eyes upon mortals: those who notice them, and to whom it is permitted to know them, recognize them. But it should seem that I am conversing with the rivulet and

the grave; for Lazarus does not hear me. Nevertheless, my belov'd brother, I must yield myself up the pleasing illusion of being able to converse with you. That venerable old man, whose silver locks shade his open forehead, and who bears that red pilgrim's staff, is Hushai (12). That young man who is walking near the bend of the rivulet, and who gravely raises his eyes to Heaven, is Jethro (13), the shepherd of Median. See how the gentle Meggido, Jeptha's daughter, is conceal'd under a veil which resembles a mist, and scarcely suffers her golden girdle to be seen.

But the eyes of the now silent and immortal Mary were chiefly fix'd upon the Mediator. Rapt in a pleasing and continual enchantment, delighted with the new world in which she found herself, she is observant of every thing, and she participates in the most trivial circumstances with the most lively interest. Her attention is now directed towards Korah (14), who was gently placing a harp, richly ornamented with cords, against an olive tree; next she observes how his Jedithun (15) decorates the harp with garlands of flowers, which perfume the air with their delicious odour; while, farther on, Rachel twines the ivy round an elm. She also perceives Jemima (16) approaching Rachel, and seeming anxious to assist her, though she is meditating upon the propriety of appearing to the assembled mortals. The shepherd Zalmona is also among the risen; it was he who dy'd of joy, at Bethlehem, while listening to the chorus of immortals, singing hymns in honour of the babe in the manger. Mary sees him walking by the side of an older shepherd of Bethlehem, the son of David. They each held staffs of reed, came from their fields, and were considering the revival of the faithful, and their appearance among mortals; requiring each to tell them who they were. Mary, now turning again towards Lazarus, Ah! she exclaim'd, see he is preparing to appear to thee! I perceive in the animated eyes of Eliphas (17, that he is anxious to make himself known to thee.—Ah! here he is; turn towards him!—Now he draws near us!—He is

sitting down by thee on the side of the grave; but alas! the eye no longer distinguishes him. How sudden was his transmutation when he cast off his human figure! He wishes to rise again towards the Tabor.—Stop, oh Heman! (18) stop near us, and shew thyself to my belov'd Lazarus.—Oh! suffer me to enjoy his astonishment and his transports, upon perceiving thy celestial figure! Let me witness his tears of joy.

To this invocation Heman reply'd, Our Saviour will appear to him; and when the Redeemer shall ascend to the right hand of God, thy brother will be glorify'd.

What dost thou say, immortal being? What! will Lazarus be glorify'd? Will he proceed with us towards the eternal tabernacles?—towards the bright inheritance, with the thousands of thousands of the first-born of the creation, who will unite themselves to the band of the adoring brethren?—But you are leaving me, brother!—Lazarus rose from the grave of Mary, and return'd towards the groves. Cneus (19) was alone, seated upon a bank of refreshing moss; such were his thoughts and meditations. Oh! ye fortunate beings, who have witnessed so many miracles, which were authenticated by the appearance of many risen from the dead, ye have been told, even by the messengers of God, of the certainty of a future life; and I have myself participated in your happiness, since I have been permitted to hear your recitals. It would therefore be madness still to doubt mistaken and blind frenzy!—But what shall I do? Shall I continue to serve the conquerors? Shall I continue to present my offerings to the God of Olympus—to the Thunderer? Ought I still to swear by his eagles, to shed the blood of the most worthy, and of the most innocent, that of the subjugated? and after I have shed it, ought I to join in the proud triumph of the general, and abandon myself to debauchery with the Roman conquerors? Shall I act thus when I entertain a far more enlighten'd opinion respecting the destiny of mortals, both during this life and in their future state?—Ah! no; I take a final

leave of you all, conquerors, triumphs, and gods! I devote myself henceforward to him who instructs me by his truth, that sublime and celestial truth which affords men, even here below, a consoling glimpse of futurity, when it will be fully unfolded to their view: God of gods protect me, and lead me still farther in the road to salvation!

His prayer was instantly granted, as Elihu (20) appear'd to him, and discours'd with him respecting divine salvation. The worthy Cneus was astonish'd at the goodness of God, in having been thus wonderfully merciful towards him; and long after the apparition had disappear'd, and had return'd to the world of spirits, he remain'd considering the place where it had stood, and fancy'd he still heard the words of life which it had taught him.

Bethoron (21) was affected even to the bottom of his soul, since he had learn'd that the divine Mediator still loved him, notwithstanding he had refus'd to become his disciple. But he was become the sincere disciple of the risen Saviour, who sent his faithful servants to his favourites, to give them a foretaste of celestial bliss.

Can I be still belov'd? said he; Dare I believe that I am thus favour'd? May I flatter myself with being thus bless'd?—The doubts he still entertain'd made his heart bleed, such was his grief. Lazarus perceiv'd that he requir'd consolation; but he cannot succeed in tranquillizing his mind; and Bethoron, quitting the arbour, walk'd in the garden and in the groves, with different pilgrims whom he met, who were all unknown to him, and amongst whom he conceives there may be some immortals who have appear'd, or who may yet appear, to some favour'd mortals; but, alas! he fears it will not be to him. He accosts some of them, then turns from them in tears, and contents himself with listening to what they say to each other. At last he attaches himself to Gerson (22) of Paros, who was Elihu, the friend of Job. Bethoron related, according to his desire, the various

circumstances relative to our Lord, while teaching his divine doctrine during his lifetime, which he confirm'd by the miracles that he perform'd.

Suddenly Elihu exclaim'd, Happy those whom he selected to be his witnesses!—This exclamation pierces the soul of Bethoron, who begins to suspect that Gerson is not of mortal mould; who, having turn'd towards his companions, What piercing looks, mentally exclaim'd Bethoron, and what a sonorous voice! I never before heard one so persuasive: then, what unction and what truth in his words! But why should I entertain such thoughts, which merely oppress my heart?—Oh, stranger! rather be a mortal than an immortal. Gerson, return to me.—He does not come!—Poor forsaken wretch that I am! he will not appear to me!

Wandering in this distracted state of mind, Bethoron reach'd the stream which ran by the side of Mary's grave, and, during his solitary walk, he met another stranger, who, taking his hand, assur'd him of his friendship. This induc'd Bethoron to open his heart, and to repose his afflictions in his bosom: he told him of the call which he had had from Christ, and which he had refus'd to obey, and related every circumstance which now oppress'd his mind; and asks him whether it was possible that the Mediator could still love him, or rather that he could forgive him? and, if he did forgive him——But who art thou, stranger? If thou art a celestial being, one of the blessed who have appear'd to the witnesses of the Mediator, suffer thyself to be soften'd in my behalf; do not turn from me thy expressive countenance; take pity on a miserable wretch; I do not require of thee a heavenly reward, I merely implore thy compassion. Take pity, therefore, on me, messenger of God: sublime young man, my friend! for thou hast thyself assur'd me that thou art my friend; yet I hardly dare to prefer my request to thee.—Appear to me, messenger of him who is risen, who had chosen me (wretch that I am) for his disciple, and whom I refus'd to follow.

Jedidoth (23) was unable any longer to restrain him-

self: he fell upon the neck of Bethoron, and they mingled their tears together, till at last Bethoron sunk amidst the beams of the immortal, and heaven and earth disappear'd from before the eyes of this fortunate being, whose prayer had been so fully granted.

Semida and Cidli (24) now descended from the evening star; they were led by angels towards the flowery grave of Miriam, the decea'd friend of Cidli, and to the groves of her celestial brother. Several of the risen and of the pilgrims assembled round them.

Sing us, said one of the bless'd, one of the songs of the bridegroom to his well-belov'd. Instantly was heard, as from a distance, the soft sound of a lute, and the gentle breathings of a most harmonious flute. The guests of Lazarus could not conceive from whence these enchanting sounds proceeded; sometimes they seem'd to be repeated by the echo of the woods, sometimes by the soft murmurs of the stream; they complain'd of being deceiv'd by their ears; they commanded silence; breath'd more softly, and were only the more convinc'd of the error of their senses.

How I enjoy thy bliss, Cidli! said Semida; as soon as I was transform'd, as thou underwent the same, I foresaw a happy future. The universe is very fine; but I am the more sensible of its beauties, since you partake of the same enjoyment.

To whom Cidli thus reply'd: The evening star is very beautiful, but its splendor is greatly increas'd in my eyes when you dwell upon its enchanting beauties. These suns, which are never eclips'd by the darker globes, the rosy dawn, and the soft grey of twilight, always appear more deserving of my admiration when thou art near me.

I now begin to comprehend the harmony of the motion of the worlds (25), rejoin'd Semida; but the melody of the immortals is far more perfect: it creates and excites enthusiasm; it has transported, even to beatitude, Semida and Cidli. To whom the latter—The inhabitants of the Hesperides are acquainted with the rapture of

love, yet they do not know how to love like Semida and Cidli. Semida thus reply'd: The Hesperides lead a very happy life, though nature is slow in its progress; the sensations of the soul are there felt through the medium of the seven senses; our souls can boast of a more extensive circle of enjoyment; and has th' irs the strength of our sentiments? They scarcely distinguish a flower at a distance, when we have long since discover'd it; nor can they, at the same distance, hear the soft murmurs of the rivulet, which refreshes the growing grass.

Cidli resum'd—When with my mortal eyes I saw those flowery meads, I was yet lamenting in that valley of tears, the fragility of man—my own, and the short-liv'd beauty of the flowers. But since Semida, bright as the morning star, has thrown herself into my arms——

Here Cidli interrupted her song, upon perceiving her mother bow'd down with grief, lying at the foot of a decay'd palm tree. At this affecting sight, her daughter, unable to restrain her feelings, darts towards the author of her being, in all the dazzling radiance of her new state of existence. Her mother sinks under the excess of joy, and expires in the arms of her child!

I should also be very happy, said Semno, one of the guests, if I could see any of these apparitions of the deceas'd; not that I require to do so to convince me of the resurrection of the Mediator; of that I am fully persuaded. I am well acquainted, said an inhabitant of heaven, (but who only appear'd under the disguise of a pilgrim) with the real strength of thy mind, and the calmness with which thou examinest even those objects which excite the greatest emotions in the souls of others, as the tempest excites the fury of the waves. The immortal ceas'd. No, said he to himself, after a moment's reflection, I will not discover myself to him, notwithstanding I am well aware of the strength of his mind; such an apparition, in spite of the joy it would occasion him, might affect him too forcibly, and the enjoyments

of a few delicious moments might destroy the repose of his future life.

Meanwhile the Saviour still continu'd upon the summit of Tabor, passing judgment upon the actions of the deceas'd, and weighing their intentions in the scales of justice; he also saw from thence the happiness which those enjoy'd who were the guests of Lazarus.

Bersebon, (26) one of the ten lepers who had been cur'd by Jesus, and the only one whose gratitude had induc'd him to return thanks, heard, as he drew near the walks shaded by palm trees, the united sounds of the gethith, the harp, the lute. He listens with rapture to the delightful sounds, which bring the most lively agreeable images to his mind. But soon he perceives beneath the palm trees, many radiant human figures, who were nevertheless as veil'd by light mists: the more he consider'd them, the more agreeable and heavenly seem'd the sounds of the harp. He was seiz'd with a transport of joy, when one of these majestic figures advanc'd towards him, took his hand, and led him under the green shade of the bowers; from whence he perceiv'd an immense field. The most dazzling light seems to illuminate this delicious space, and one of the immortals said to him, Go and gather a branch of palm for each of us. He obey'd in trembling, and soon brought to each a branch. One of the immortals gave him his, which agreeably moderated his excessive joy, and embolden'd him to ask, Are you not descended from heaven?

We have newly risen from our graves, reply'd the immortal; we have dy'd, and are reanimated.

Was it him who deliver'd me from approaching death who reanimated you in your graves? ask'd Bersebon.

Christ in dying, recall'd us from the bosom of the earth to immortal life.

Shall you remain long upon earth? Bersebon next inquir'd.

No longer than he will who awoke us from the sleep of death.

Shall you ascend with Christ to heaven?

We shall ascend with Christ to heaven.

Will our divine Saviour soon quit this earth, to ascend to heaven?

We do not know.

Oh! forgive me, thou blessed spirits, for still daring to question you: shall I die soon?

We do not know.

When you were recall'd to life, what were your feelings?

The same as those of Adam were when he was created: one day the last trumpet will also recall you to life. At these words the apparition disappear'd; the awe-struck Bersebon remain'd for a length of time where he had left him, his eyes still seeking those who had thus appear'd to him. But he no longer sees the palm trees wave, and he no longer hears the sounds of the harp, nor of the lute, whose golden chords had express'd such moving sounds.

Thus did the guests of Lazarus celebrate in these gardens, even with immortals, this friendly feast: they had merely propos'd to divert their thoughts, and they had been made partakers of the joys of heaven. When we die, we shall share the same pleasures: we only aspire to be deliver'd from our miseries, that we may take our part of the joys in reserve for the faithful.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XVIII.

The Argument.

Adam implores the Messiah to make him acquainted with the future consequence of the redemption. Our Saviour, in a vision, discloses to him what will occur during the last judgment. Adam relates what he has thus seen to the angels, and the risen from the dead; chiefly dwelling, during his narration, upon the sentences which were passed upon the persecutors of the first Christians—upon those who despise religion, who implacably pursue the virtuous—and upon the fabricators of idols. And concludes by relating the condemnation of bad kings.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XVIII.

ADAM, casting himself at the feet of the Redeemer, invok'd him in these words: If I have found favour in thy sight, grant me, oh Messiah! a glimpse into futurity, that I may form some judgment of the consequence of the redemption.

Adam, replied the Messiah, every end will be accomplish'd at the last judgment: retire under the shade of those cedars, from whence, by a soften'd light, thou shalt behold a part of the picture which the last judgment will present to every eye.

Adam retir'd under the shade of the cedars; and a deep sleep, similar to the one he enjoy'd when in the quiet enjoyment of the paradise of Eden, steep'd his senses in forgetfulness, during which he was favour'd by the promis'd vision. Slowly he arose; and, burthen'd with the weight of astonishment, he return'd towards the risen and the angels. They surround the first father, in the pleasing expectation of participating in the knowledge he had acquir'd respecting the last day. Adam seated himself upon a rising ground: the greater number plac'd themselves round the hill, in front of the highly favour'd of Christ.

During a day (1) that, under the blessing of the Lord, I had, even to the ensuing dawn, devoted to holy meditation, as these solitary, but delightful hours, fled with unusual rapidity, the sacred muse of Sion presented herself before me. Never before had the prophetess made

so strong an impression upon me: never before did her countenance bear so strong a stamp of eternity. She recited to me the vision of Adam; but she stopp'd short several times during her song. At times the deepest colour ting'd her cheeks; then again the paleness of death came over her, and depriv'd her countenance of all animation: her unclos'd lips emitted a sound similar to the murmuring of distant thunder, while her eye was gravely fix'd on vacancy: her harp seem'd ready to escape from her palsied hand, and her crown flutter'd above her floating hair: sometimes she seem'd to recover from her oppression, then her countenance was again deck'd in the smile which promis'd eternal life: the eldest daughters of the soul, the aspirations of truth, wing'd with a hundred wings, rose from her bosom, towards God, with the rushing of a tempest: thus did she appear to my astonish'd eye, while fix'd on darkness. My left hand touch'd the earth, my grave, and I rais'd my right hand towards heaven. Inhabitants of the earth, and ye tenants of the grave, I will recite unto ye, as nearly as I can, what I thus learnt from her, though my bounded understanding did not enable me either to comprehend, or to seize the most brilliant thoughts; and I have neither her melodious voice, nor her mellifluous accents, to give charms to my relation.

Adam, the first created, thus began: With the rapidity of thought, of a cherubim, I was conducted among numerous legions of the dead risen from their graves; for boundless were these fields of resurrection. They were all my children. Oh thou Eternal Father of all created beings, what a sight was this for me! and how much more was I gratified by the sight of Him who was seated upon his throne, to pass judgment upon the children of Adam! Ye ancestors of the Messiah! and ye angels! ah! how fully did I then appreciate the inestimable gift of immortality! I saw all these objects, and yet I liv'd! The day will arrive when you will see this numerous legion, as well as me; after which eternity will follow, and none of you will be able to explain what

you have seen: for, oh! the Judge will then be upon his throne!

While pronouncing these words, Adam fell upon his knees, and, in the fervour of his enthusiasm, he offer'd up this prayer:

Jesus Christ! thou hast granted my prayer; and I have had a glimpse of that dreadful, that decisive day: I have heard the thunder of thy voice while pronouncing judgment, thou Son of God!

Rising from his humble posture, the father of mankind thus proceeded: The epoch of the final decision seem'd to me to have already lasted some time: many had been judg'd before I drew near. This was not a day cheer'd by the light of the sun; it was either extinguish'd or cover'd in; but the dazzling lustre of the throne awfully illuminated these boundless fields of resurrection, and enabled me to discern Christians the persecutors of other Christians, because they differ'd respecting the doctrine of the Friend to humanity thus sacrific'd to prejudice—brothers, who had murder'd their brethren, in obedience to the commands of charity. (I shudder'd, and my glaz'd eyes again saw Abel weltering in his blood, near the altar of burnt-offerings, upon again seeing the good become the victims of the wicked.) These Christians were at last call'd upon to appear before God. The cherubim who summon'd them, descended from the throne towards the boundless plain of justice. He stops upon an eminence, and pour'd upon the earth two o'erflowing bowls, the one containing tears, the other blood. When the blood was mingl'd with the tears, he turn'd towards the throne, crying, God of peace, and Protector of persecuted innocence, thou hast number'd these tears! A sudden emotion communicates itself to the angels, and to all the souls of the faithful, when the Judge, turning on that side, affectionately regarded these victims: neither psalms, nor prayers of thanksgiving, can describe the expressive look he gave them.

Nevertheless the band of victims remain'd silent, their hearts still glowing with the same sentiments of charity

in which they had departed this life: their eyes, before they were clos'd in the slumber of death, had been rais'd toward heaven, to ask forgiveness for their murderers; but neither mercy nor compassion any longer appear'd upon the countenance of the Most Holy, when he rose to revenge the ashes of the murder'd.

Blessings and enjoyments, pronounc'd the friend of humanity, the angel who had pour'd out the bowls, be the portion of those who offer'd themselves upon the altar of the divine victim, as martyrs for his sake, and whose bodies are reanimated, after having repos'd in peace for the short period of some centuries! But horror, torment, and desolation, shall be the portion of all those blasphemers of God who have drawn the sword against the witnesses of the Eternal, to strike these victims, or who have converted into ashes these tortur'd bodies (2). Why did that superb banner, in honour of the holy cross (3), that solemn witness of the divine love, wave near the spot where you murder'd your brethren? And you also dar'd to profane the name of Him whose immensity admits of no extension, and whose infinitude requires no numerical addition—the name of Him, who extended his mercies towards all men, whom he consider'd as his brethren: yet ye have dar'd to name Him—Himself! there, where the roaring thunder would have descended upon your guilty heads, where the earth would have open'd to engulph you, if he had not suffer'd his vengeance to accumulate against this hour of retributive justice. Look back to the past: let your eyes revert from these plains of death, to the time when you were living, when you fancied, in your wild delirium, that you already touch'd the crown of glory with your blood-stain'd hands. Observe the faces of those whom you saw discolour'd in death: recollect the convulsive shuddering which pervaded every member of these Christians, in consequence of the struggles which human nature, in its prime, makes against approaching dissolution; while their heroic tranquillity prov'd that their minds rose superior to their sufferings,

and that they no longer car'd about their bodies, the dust of which they abandon'd, without regret, to the winds, well aware that they would require it of them again at some future period. You heard those songs of triumph in which they continu'd to join, amidst the surrounding flames, till their increasing fury prevented them from raising their voices in praise of God: but you consider'd this sight with the most inhuman indifference; and what is now the result of your barbarity? Praise and glory to God Almighty, and to Jesus Christ, the Brother of these martyrs, who has prov'd victorious over death; and, instead of those terrifying shudders which precede dissolution, a soft and powerful emotion steals over those risen from the grave, when the winds, and every source of corruption, return the dust of their deceas'd bodies, and the new creation extends over all nature; when the hymn, began in fear and trembling, rises to the Allelujah, and, instead of an invocation to mercy, the heaven resounds with their Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, who was, and is, and is to come!

Thus did the powerful accuser (4) speak. Another soon rose to follow his example: he presented himself with a most formidable aspect, and said, Those who were depriv'd of life, and those who depriv'd them of it, are alike condemn'd. Their wish to render religion subservient to their ambition, has led to their condemnation, notwithstanding the pains they took to conceal their real motives and their proud thoughts in the deepest recesses of their hearts; and though their tombs were form'd of the most precious marbles, He who sees every thing, had, from his abode in heaven, read what was passing in their hearts: their criminality was conceal'd from men; and even had they discover'd their turpitude, it was not requir'd of them to sacrifice all those who have err'd: but I shall unveil the real motives of their actions.

No one was requir'd to sit in judgment upon holy things, but the Judge who is eternal. If the Christians profan'd the purity of their faith; if some sinners have

approach'd too near the Son without paying him a sufficiently profound adoration; if, placing too blind a confidence in a wrong interpretation of his word, and forgetful of their own unworthiness, they vainly fancied they saw him face to face, and their fascinated eyes induc'd them to form a deceitful notion of him, and to mistake an illusion for the reality; if this idea, too strongly impress'd upon an ardent brain, render'd them guilty, the honour of the sanctuary too nearly concern'd Him, who, to serve us, enter'd into the Holy of the Most Holy, not to induce him to be himself the Judge of these sinners, without requiring that the momentary possessor of mortal power should assist him to crush them with his thunder: yet this is what ye have dar'd to do, instead of working out, with fear and trembling, your own salvation: ye have rais'd your brazen forehead above the other insects: ye have stolen the torments of hell to torture your brethren; and, with a deliberation worthy of your gloomy barbarity, ye have instituted a bloody tribunal.

Who shall number the afflictions—who shall describe the vehemence of the torments which hang suspended over your devoted heads? I appeal to the blood you have shed, which rises in judgment against you, and which loudly accuses you of murder!—He who is seated upon the throne is an attentive listener, and is ready to revenge every wound from which it flow'd, and, at the same time, the murder of the innocent!

When this accusing spirit had ceas'd to speak, one of the elders (5) among those who were nearest the throne, stepp'd without the radiant circle, apparently wrapt in profound meditation. You have heard of the most feeling of the disciples: his name, before he return'd to the bosom of God, was Thaddeus: his present name is Elim, which was that of his guardian angel while upon earth. He thus spoke: I turn my eyes from the life which you have led: it was mark'd by blood: this frightful road leads to where the innocent perish'd. Were souls call'd into existence to experience such

sentiments? Surely they were created in a gloomy awful moment, which I am at a loss to describe. Had they already witness'd the judgment of God, when the divine malediction was pronounc'd in Eden; when the first death, the first groan of nature fulfill'd the sentence of God? and did they only return upon earth, loaded with curses, to be, alas! the heralds of the last day? Time! thou hast brought towards eternity, souls incapable of charitable actions: yet they were not such at their creation: they have disfigur'd themselves: do not publish before the throne, nor in the tabernacles, the abode of the bless'd, that they have thus, for their misfortune, degenerated.

Shall I still shed tears over these souls? Not over them, but over the worth of those beings who have thus stray'd, alas! from the end for which they were created. The groans of the unfortunate, even during their last moments, did not excite your pity: no distress was capable of affecting your tender and delicate nerves, while others could not witness an imploring tear, without being mov'd to the very bottom of their hearts. I did not expect that you would experience that soft and sacred emotion, at the sight of suffering virtue, the sure proof of excessive sensibility; this would have been too consoling for the righteous: yet surely immortal souls ought not to be wholly devoid of humanity, they surely ought to be acquainted with such a feeling: but may misery be your portion, ye inhuman wretches! who could not see an insect upon earth, without admiring, in the existence of the animal, the effect of the universal protection of the Creator: nor could you raise your eyes to heaven, without perceiving, in the starry firmament, the work of the Supreme Ruler of the universe: but you never did raise them with fervor—you never shed a tear over the miseries of your fellow-creatures—you never listen'd to the voice of pity in their behalf: well! then listen to the voice of vengeance, which will now be as prompt as it has heretofore been tardy. The

Judge of the world is not inclin'd to shew you any mercy.

Elim was still speaking, when, while sitting on his throne, the Judge suddenly turn'd towards one of the destroying angels, a look which carried terror in its expression. How can I describe this look? how can I find words to express the anger which sparkl'd in his eyes? how convey to you an idea of the voice in which he gave this order to the seraphim?—Descend! and with thy touch, shed over their senses the most terrifying visions: let them anticipate the misery to which they are doom'd, as the beginning of their punishment. This sentence was terrific in the extreme. The destroying angel darted forward, quick as thought; and having shed a thick gloom around the band of persecutors, he drew near them, saying, in a voice of thunder, Remark, and follow me! Instantly taking the advance of them, he turn'd towards them with menacing looks, and plung'd into the surrounding gloom. The infernal gulph yawn'd and open'd beneath the feet of the seraphim; and my eyes were open'd (6), that I might also see what they saw. They wish'd to withdraw their eyes, but the all-mighty power of the Son oblig'd them to stand as firm as rocks, and to look before them.

A boundless and desolate space was cover'd with bones and skulls: the north wind rag'd furiously; it scatter'd these relics of mortality, and seem'd to give to each a convulsive shudder: each seem'd to have the gift of speech, which they merely employ'd to curse their destiny. Turning my eyes from this scene of horrors, I rais'd them in supplication to Him who is merciful to those who shew mercy unto others. While I yet pray'd, there came out, from among the multitude who had been murder'd, a hundred young men, cloth'd in white garments: each one was as beautiful as the spring in Eden, or as the dawn of the glorious day of the resurrection: the rapidity of their flight produc'd a melodious sound! How gentle, and how interesting

were the looks of these brothers of Abel! They laid their crowns at the foot of the throne, and sang the praises of Him who sat in judgment. He was the subject of their hymns—Who is that who rises from the mount of Cedars in a sweat of blood? Hosanna!—Who is that who is cover'd with wounds upon the mountain of Salem? How beautiful do these wounds make him appear!—It is I who have been sacrific'd for the salvation of men!

Whence comes it that your limbs are burthen'd by the weight of that cross? why does the blood flow from thy forehead, as from the forehead of a fighting man? why does this blood cry aloud, Vengeance?

I have alone fought the battle: none of the sons of earth have come to my assistance.

Amen! amen! Thou art the Author and the Finisher of our faith; the Beginning and the End—hosanna! Thou didst quickly withdraw thy foot from the grave—Thou didst ascend thy throne, upon which thou now sittest as Sovereign Judge, to judge both the quick and the dead!

For thou hast reanimated those who have fought the good fight: thou didst decree that we should be pierc'd with wounds, that we might die martyrs to thy cause; for the enemies of God were also ours, when they imprison'd us in dungeons, and loaded us with heavy chains, and when they condemn'd us to the stake, or to die by the sword, according to their despotic will: cursed be the murderers! but may the bones of the good repose in peace!

When we receiv'd the spirit of prophecy, and were endu'd with courage to die; when, thanks to the Finisher, we at last expir'd—then our race was run. We had attain'd our celestial goal, and we obtain'd our recompence, and all our past sorrows were banish'd from our recollection. Life appear'd to have had the brevity of a discourse, to have disappear'd as dust is carried before the wind!

Thou transitory life! thou mere vision in the creation!

art thou thus rewarded in the day of days? art thou judg'd worthy of such crowns, and of becoming the companion of eternity?

Oh, praises! may ye resound without ceasing! divine Inspiration! raise thy wings, pursue thy flight, and proclaim our happiness! let thy voice become that of joy and exultation; and may it, by mingling in the chorus before the thrones, be expressive of praise, adoration, glory, and honour, to thee, the Sovereign of heaven, and the consoler of all the afflicted: before this clay was form'd—before the soul that was to animate it existed, thou wert, and thou hadst even then resolv'd to endure thy sufferings as the Restorer of innocence!

The first of the angels of death now drew nearer the throne by a thousand steps: his approach resembl'd that of an army. At his coming the trumpet sounded: it ceas'd when he thus express'd himself: Let those who mock'd Him who rose from the dead advance towards the throne; let them consider him who was crucify'd, and learn to know what they have been themselves! They obey'd the summons. It was no longer in their power to conceal the innate cruelty of their souls under deceiving smiles. Their hearts were pourtray'd in their faces, and all the wickedness which had hitherto been conceal'd in their bosoms: thus they appear'd in all their native deformity before their judges. These, through the circle of gilded clouds, turn'd their eyes upon each other, anxious to discover who was to judge these enemies of God.

In the midst of the circle of the beatified was a youth, whose countenance, beaming with joy, resembl'd the rosy dawn of the skies: the paleness of death, which had overtaken him before he had risen to manhood, and the regret he had felt to perceive himself cut off, as it were, in the flower of his youth, had been amply compensated by the gift of angelic beauty, far superior to that he had display'd as a mortal: his whole soul was disclos'd in his speaking features. Stephen, the first martyr, who, while smiles deck'd his countenance,

clos'd his eyes in death, even in the very flower of his age, advanc'd towards him. This notice encourag'd him modestly to cast his eyes around: at first he trembl'd, but feeling encourag'd by the bright radiance of eternal life, and inspir'd by the joy of innocence, an harmonious sound issu'd from his lips.

Affliction will no longer, as formerly, said he (7), shed its baneful clouds over my life: yes, I will now name thee without any hesitation. Oh! sacred name of father! for, oh! my father and my brother are also in that crowd! But you are no longer my father, nor you my brother! What had he done to you? speak: what had he done to you, your patient son, though immoveable in his principles? My death-like silence, and my discolour'd cheeks, ought to have excited your pity, instead of which, by the malignity of your artful discourse, you cruelly endeavour'd to deprive me, even in death, of my only hope, that of eternal salvation, to shake my faith in him who was crucify'd, whose blood was shed to obtain the forgiveness of our sins: you wish'd to deprive me of the hope I entertain'd of one day waking to an eternity of bliss, the most powerful consolation of the struggling soul, when ready to quit its mortal tenement. This great day has also awaken'd you, but not with that exultation, those revivifying sentiments, which induce us to address hymns of praise to Him who died to save us all. The pious spirit of your son, superior in instinct to your own, was too well aware of its worth, to suffer itself to be depriv'd of its crown of glory, by the seduction of the enemies to immortality. This spirit quitted its terrestrial dust with the most satisfactory hope, even with the certainty that it was not perishable, but of a price superior to heaven and earth. Consider the looks and the victory of the immortals: you saw their eyes clos'd in death, their breath forsaking their bodies: but look at them now, and remark if their triumph is not to you the forerunner of eternal death!

As he spoke these words, the dazzling beauty of the young man became superior to what the most brilliant

fancy can conceive: it more than equall'd that of the first rank of angels. Upon perceiving his increase of glory, the victors saluted him by a new name.

After him rose a sage, who, from examining the secret labyrinths of nature, had rais'd his ideas towards the contemplation of the heavens. The stars of Orion had gradually assisted his progress; but he had acquir'd a still greater degree of perfection by his profound knowledge of men, whose actions led him to scrutinize their consciences, though they constantly endeavour to mislead the frequently mistaken judgments of the world, by trying to appear in a favourable light, and even to raise themselves in the unerring scales of the Sovereign Judge. As a stream which falls from any height soon forms a torrent, such was the eloquence of the sage; a solemn countenance gave strength to his words:—

I was an upright searcher of hearts, who have slowly, and by various efforts, reach'd the road which leads to the eternal Son. You were more fortunate, you more enlighten'd and sublime souls (8); you have long been able to say to the Light of the world, Thou art the Light! and to the blood of Him that was sacrific'd, Thou art consecrated blood! and when he bow'd his head in death, Thou art eternal! My steps were long arrested amidst the shadows of the creation, while seeking God: nevertheless, even the shadow of the Divinity inspir'd me with a holy tremor: when I met with any object likely to guide me in my researches after truth, I scrupulously examin'd whether it was of divine origin; and even then I only, after long reflection, suffer'd myself to pronounce, This is truth! and when, in the labyrinth of knowledge, I thought I discover'd the track of the road towards God, I said aloud in my prayer, This is sacred ground (9); this is the gate of heaven. Nevertheless, one day, while I was at prayers, it open'd for me: my eyes were dazzl'd by the glorious sight, and I render'd homage unto the Son in all his glory: I then modestly fulfill'd the destiny which was

assign'd me, and from that moment the shades of the creation were withdrawn from before my eyes. I discover'd in this image the distinguishing feature of the Creator of all things; I again, with increasing interest, saw upon the cross, him whom I had before seen in the starry heavens, because I knew that he who had reclin'd his head in the sleep of death, had also commanded the graves to deliver up their dead. Were such the fruits of your researches? did you walk in my steps, when you proudly declar'd that you were seeking truth, that divine offspring of God? Ah! do not any longer profane the name you were never worthy to mention; this solemn adjuration might suddenly reanimate the divine wrath, and you would be annihilated by one of his all-powerful looks. Mistaken and guilty heroes have destroy'd the human race; mistaken and cruel priests have sacrific'd Christians, even before their altars: they were certainly deserving of punishment; but those bloody altars, those murderous fields of battle, those wounds, merely caus'd the destruction of their bodies; but you have, by your treacherous assertions, occasioned the misery of their immortal souls. The wounds which you thus inflicted, did not, I agree, occasion them that sort of death which merely leads them to the grave, to prepare them for another and a better world; but you have drawn upon them eternal death; for you have distributed among the people the foaming cups, overflowing with the poison of voluptuousness, and with the satiric laugh of insult; and still oftner have you distributed them in those palaces where the tyrants, when drunk with this seducing beverage, easily forgets his charity towards his fellow-creatures—that he is doom'd like them to die—nay, he even affects to shake off the terrors of the future day of judgment; though his words and actions are all noted, and the tears of the faithful, as they rise towards heaven, bear witness against him, even at the feet of Jesus, our divine Mediator.

Profound silence now reigned in heaven; but soon the patriarchs of the chosen race (10) assembled in a la

minous circle, as well as several other Hebrews, who, before the day of judgment, had been led to believe in the Son of God: they resembled an army, hovering in the clouds, bearing in their bosoms an ardent torch, to enlighten the formidable witnesses who were to appear against the summon'd culprits. One of those witnesses rais'd himself above the others, who all approve and agree with him in point of sentiment, and who all join with him in pronouncing sentence of death. He who was spokesman thus address'd the culprits:

While He (11) yet sojourn'd upon earth, he summon'd the dead from the graves, to be witnesses of his divinity. Then the most distinguish'd among the revilers (12) of his doctrine, resolv'd to destroy those witnesses; but the never-to-be-destroy'd people of Abraham (who, during the delirium of their furious rage, had brought upon themselves the blood of the eternal Son, by solemnly delivering themselves up as victims before the gloomy altars of judgment, to expiate the blood which they had shed) were dispers'd among all the people of the earth, that they might bear witness of having spill'd the blood of the Judge. And here we are, and here are our condemn'd brethren. We have all liv'd upon earth: Can the heavens, with their numerous sons—can the earth, and its innumerable offspring, which grow amidst the variety of its annual productions, proclaim more loudly the existence of our divine Mediator, than does this immense body of people? But as you have plac'd no faith in these witnesses, the restoration of the dead to life would not to you have been more convincing, so much have you lower'd the human mind, which is the image of God, and your presumption has fix'd you in your own sphere, without confidence in the Supreme Being. The veriest slaves of idolatry may therefore turn away in scorn from such Christians, far more guilty than themselves; may their consciences be severely rous'd from the stupefaction in which they have bound it, that it may render unequivocal witness of the existence of him whom our race alone proclaim to have been!

How shall I name him (13) whom you at first saw pursuing with vengeance the society of the faithful, and who afterwards became one of the golden columns of the temple (14), who is the most holy, and who has ascended even unto heaven?—Oh! how shall I name him? The new name that he bears cannot be express'd. Thou wert also of my race, holy man! I still bless the clay from whence I sprung.

For ever, reply'd St. Paul, will my eyes dwell upon the sufferings by which I was so loudly call'd to heaven, even by him whom I persecuted, that I might bear witness respecting him to these innumerable bands of conquerors—respecting him whose name, ye angels, is Salvation, and whose voice is Hosanna in the highest of heavens. I hold my peace, and veil the solemnity of our eternity, before the reprobated, of whom the name is death. As soon as a martyr my blood was also shed, I no longer shed tears over the enemies of the cross; but I became their judge—I foresaw their end. This it was t these spirits who would not acknowledge the splendor of the Father in the presence of the Son, became miserable; they were humbled, sunk, and overwhelm'd in the obscurity of their false wisdom; they were tormented by their pride. My soul absolutely despises yē; ye hardly deserve to be judg'd before the assembled human race. What a prospect was that of ascending even unto God! how sublime and beautiful! it leads from one perspective to another—always towards eternity; it is like gradually ascending towards a temple, built above the suns, nearer the throne, nevertheless leaning upon nature. His offering was his blood, shed for the pardon of sinners; his hymn was all joy; and the accomplishment of his end was the eternal salvation of the soul: thus fulfilling in all his thoughts and affections the plenitude of all his vows. This is what was religion, ye madmen, who have so fatally mistaken its purport, or rather who would not understand its real meaning, since you rejected its consolations with the most bitter scorn; and were not even mov'd by the last exclamation of

Jesus upon the cross. Many centuries have elaps'd since his eyes again open'd, and since his then silent mouth has pronounc'd the decisions of the Judge of the world. Proclaim it in the inclosure of death; tell it at the gates of hell, how the mighty who menac'd Heaven are fall'n. Soon will these condemn'd threateners groan in the bottomless gulph; they will only again raise their heads to say one to the other, Let us lament with tears that we were ever born, and over the hour of the creation, which form'd us for eternity; for the Crucified is seated upon his throne, to judge the wicked. Thus spoke St. Paul. Next the Judge, with calm majesty, thus express'd himself:

After the hours of morning granted to the earth, the evening hour, which is that of judgment, is arriv'd; you believ'd it to be imaginary; nevertheless the time is come: it was as if the insect, who had been since yesterday an inhabitant of the mud, had fancy'd that the thunder could not roar in the heavens above. Thus did you warp your mind in your terrestrial nook; but the moment is arriv'd when all the enemies of austere virtue are weigh'd, and have been found wanting in the scales of justice. Oh! you sinners, who mistook the breath of life for the soul (15), who think it merely heir to the grave, you now perceive it does not die, and that he who became extinct upon the cross in so cruel a manner, is eternal. He was so before thou meanly dar'd to insult the deceas'd Reconcil'd. Most gracious and most patient Jehovah, who look'd with pity upon the Son of man in his last moments, and who was well acquainted with all his worth, efface, oh Father! from thy book of life the names of these blasphemers; they are no longer my brethren; they have dishonour'd the Mediator of thy covenant, his blood, his mortal agonies, his glaz'd eyes while expiring upon the cross, his resurrection, his ascension, all his joys, and all his sorrows. Yes, by my sufferings (16), by my humanity, by my patient death, my resurrection from death, my exaltation to the throne, by my glorification, disappear from before my eyes, and become what you have made yourselves.

Thus did he pronounce their sentence of death. It pierc'd even to the very bottom of their souls, and arm'd their conscience with flames: they wish'd to look at him, but being unable, they sunk devoid of strength; for the blood no longer flow'd from the wounds of the eternal Son; the awful throne was not upon the hill of Golgotha, and the voice proceeding from the throne was no longer the cry of mercy. Nevertheless one of the condemn'd arose from the dust, and dar'd to turn his eyes towards the Judge, when, having with an effort open'd his arms, he cried, in a voice which penetrated the heavens, and the earthly fields around—

If mercy is thus bounded, may the almighty power be less confin'd! seize thy thunder, oh Avenger, and annihilate me at once! If thy thunder can also destroy souls, may mine be set on fire—be consum'd to ashes, and expire! but may I nevertheless be enabled, though with a faltering hand, to seize in my fury some of the ashes, and to throw them towards Heaven! and may my soul perish in the midst of these interrupted thoughts! May the remains of this mortal carcase be abandon'd to the winds, and by them be wafted into the impenetrable depths and extent of void!

During his exclamations, all of us who heard him rais'd our clasp'd hands towards the firmament, upon perceiving the trumpet of judgment fall from the hands of the angel of death, and Eloa covering his face. We saw the Judge turn round, extend his arm, and dart a flaming thunder-bolt, which re-echoed amidst the heights, and in the deeps, even to the vaults of hell. A hundred hills sunk upon the summit of the supreme seat of justice; the ruins shook, smok'd, and still crackled, as if, though already reduc'd to ashes by the flaming thunder, the dismal rumbling noise of an earthquake still agitated the mountain, preparatory to fresh devastations.

My eyes (17) sought the blasphemer amidst the wreck of nature. I saw him shuddering as he reascended; the avenging thunder had reanimated him in the warmth of life, that his sensations might be the more violent; the

sensibility of his heart was become more keen; his vague thoughts were subjected by the oppression of indefinite subtilties: the voice of his despair resounded throughout the field of terror, even till it reach'd our ears.—Cease, he cry'd, thou messenger of vengeance! thunder of the Judge, cease. Alas! thou wilt forever ring in my ears—to all eternity will these smoking hills fall upon me. Ye overwhelming rocks, why did not ye become my tomb, that I might have been farther remov'd from his eternal summons? Curs'd be the mouth which open'd to reclaim his justice, in a manner to irritate him still more!—May curses light upon both life and death, and upon all who, from the bosoms of their mothers, or from the grave, arrive at either terrestrial or immortal life!

My vision now presented before my eyes various obscure figures, who rapidly flitted before me, and disappear'd in the same manner; sometimes I heard the sound of thunder, sometimes that of harps; at others, the awful summons which brought spirits before the throne. But I could not seize the expression of the voices; I merely caught some imperfect sounds; the rest escap'd my ear, amid the rolling of the thunder, as the voice of lamentation is lost amid the general wreck of nature, in a town overwhelm'd with an earthquake. A variety of successive objects incessantly and indistinctly flitted before my eyes: sometimes time fled with rapid strides; sometimes it mov'd heavily forwards. I fancy'd that years elaps'd while these apparitions pass'd before me in my vision; but one scene was fully reveal'd to my perception. I saw Cain, under a gigantic figure, and many heroes, under similar forms. Cain was fastening them together with heavy chains, the clashing noise of which drown'd that of the thunder. At last, the indistinct apparitions having all vanish'd from before my eyes, I had a fresh vision.

Profound silence reign'd among all the decens'd around; when Eloa, with the greatest marks of joy, advanc'd to fulfil a supreme order. If an angel could

arise from death, it would be with such enthusiasm, with such exalted joy, with such a triumphant countenance: Eloa departed to bring a band of the elect to the divine Redeemer. I perceiv'd, as I saw them advance, that they were the best amongst men, the glory of my race. I rose out of respect to their merit, and in my excess of joy at their glory, I exclaim'd—Ah! I will strew palms upon your road; because you have liv'd and died worthy of your existence, and of your holy end. During this exclamation, admir'd even by the seraphims, they arriv'd in all their splendor at the foot of the throne of the Supreme; and the next moment the trumpet thus resounded:

Appear, ye who are the disgrace of humanity; whether ye have dwell'd under roofs of thatch, or in gilded palaces, appear, ye contemptible wretches! ye who ignominiously defam'd the modest merit of the best of the human race. In consequence of this peremptory summons, a multitude appear'd: they ascended, burthen'd with their own weight, and were judged.

It was Heman (18) who judg'd them: the holy man of God thus address'd them: The Image of the Divinity has, it is true, been impair'd by sinners, and the traces of the Creator are no longer distinguishable among the inhabitants of the earth; yet, in every age, God has never fail'd to send men whose more sublime souls have recogniz'd the end of creation: most estimable men, sacred remnants of paradise, who ought, by a powerful and manifest voice, to have recall'd to your recollection the day of the creation of Eden, and the value of your being, which God has not disdain'd to render immortal; they recall'd the judgment of God to your recollection—to you! whose views did not extend beyond the grave. Such were the messengers of God, whom ye rejected; but they, too firm to be shaken by those who misunderstood them, chose to distinguish themselves by their private principles. These principles consisted in forming to themselves very high ideas of the First of Beings, and in measuring themselves by the measure suitable to mor-

tals; in devoting their time to prayer and adoration, without seeking to make a merit of so doing, before the Supreme Being; in not contenting themselves with displaying an appearance of sensibility, but in employing themselves in the active and constant practice of humanity; in seeking that inward peace, which induc'd them to render God alone the witness of their private sacrifices, and of their good actions; while their wise discretion taught them to hold their peace, even when they were misunderstood by virtuous men; and these principles led them, even while enjoying the comforts of this life, to look forward with the most enthusiastic satisfaction towards the future, and prepar'd them to greet the approach of death with smiles.

It was beings endow'd with these virtues whom ye rejected! instead of humbling yourselves before their superior merit, and learning from them that the pleasures of this life were far beneath those of immortality, and that a soul which knows how to appreciate the value of its origin, ought, when it is committed to its own guidance, to aspire, though with due humility, to attain the purest virtues, and the most solid basis for inward peace. But, instead of endeavouring to emulate these virtuous mortals, you became their persecutors; you felt hatred for these best of men; you o'erspread their actions with the slimey mud of your dark calumnies; you vilify'd angels! He who judges is holy: I swear by his name, that he has also bent his eyes upon the wicked who have tormented his elect; but with the look which now pierces your souls, and with its all-powerful fire, fixes you in these gulphs, into which you will be plung'd forever. He ceas'd, and one of those youths who had faded before he reach'd maturity—one of those who would have been a martyr to virtue, had men been still worthy to possess any, this young man said:

When I saw suffering virtue fleeing to the remotest solitudes, shedding tears, which merely excited contempt, my conscience led me to guess what sentence would be pronounc'd against its persecutors. I turn'd my eyes

from their ways; I curs'd those who curs'd; and, seiz'd with the fire of youth, I tore myself from their hands, and struck with my feet that earth which was inhabited by these blasphemers, and prepar'd myself for my end, in the full expectation of their being judg'd and condemn'd. I am now acquainted with the divine sentence, which runs thus:

He who will never cease to be, has bestow'd upon those who have invincibly borne up against persecution, a blessed smile: He who died, and rose again from the dead, has seen the road they travell'd strewn with palms and misery: He will reward them.

The Judge quickly decided the fate of the oppressors: the flaming words of his decision resounded in the air, and they fled from the field of justice. They were still flying, when a cherubim hastily advanc'd across the clouds, which were driven before him, animated by the terror of his anger. Each stride he took occasion'd the roaring of a tempest: at last, he stopp'd: he did not speak, but rais'd his arm with a threatening gesture, and receiv'd from heaven a censor, fill'd with fire; the shadow of his uprais'd arm extended over a multitude of those who stood before the throne. Quickly reversing the resounding cup, he shed the flames: the cup still resounded; the fire still fell upon the field of justice, when the destroying angel pronounc'd this oath, which was heard in the whole extent of heaven:—

By name, he is call'd Jehovah, and he is also call'd the Avenger, and the adoration of the faithful. It is he who was the founder of that religion which he taught men; and he alone was acquainted with the essence of God. Appear, ye proud cheats; appear, ye fabricators of false gods; ye who disfigur'd the Most High in heaven, and the well-belov'd of men, or who have had the presumption to place beside him objects, which ye liken'd unto the Divinity.

They appear'd, and were judg'd by the Founder, under the divinity of religion, who first foretold the coming of the Son, and who will remain an undeniable witness

respecting him, even to the end of the day of judgment. Moses, who, while a mortal man, was accustom'd to stand at the right of the thunder, near the sound of the trumpets, said:

I see all the misty fields of the earth; I see it cover'd with images of a singular invention: they were to you as gods; they were to represent to you Him, that even the inhabitants of heaven cannot delineate: they did not afford you the faintest idea of him; you possess'd too much understanding not to comprehend, even during your abasement (19), that the worm which crawls cannot issue its commands to the clouds; that the inhabitant of the waves cannot relieve the wretched; nor could you believe that the rising sun could soften the hearts, nor sanctify the minds of those who aspire to the peace of innocence, admitting even that the perfumes and the sacred fire were constantly burning upon the altars of such gods, and that the hymns to their praise resounded without ceasing. Yes, you were aware of the insufficiency of such objects, and yet your self-love prevented you from falling prostrate before the Most High, before whom you were only as dust. If you were sufficiently debas'd to give into such errors, how could you be vain of being the founders of such sects, of being the propagators of such opinions? How could you teach immortal souls to pay divine honours to an animal, which merely crawls on earth for a few days? Learn also, that he who from the heavens above hears and sees every thing, has remark'd the pomp of your offerings, and the noise you often made, when the idol of the grove, or Orion, were deaf to your petitions, and when the latter did not, at your bidding, run in his courses. Ye who have led mortals on to the greatest abasement of the mind, by deceiving them with false gods, knew that he was aware of these abominations, and of the licentiousness of your dissolute temples, in which ye seduc'd the minds of the people; he has heard the groans of the children in the arms of your devouring idols, while the shrill sound of the clarionets in vain tried to deaden the

agonizing screams of these infants; they were only the more distinctly heard, the more the maternal heart endeavour'd to stifle its natural feelings; as you inhumanly forc'd them to be spectators of these bloody scenes, without granting them permission to cover their faces with a thick veil, as you oblig'd them to smile at the death of their children. Now the Lord requires at your hands this innocent blood; the sins which you have committed with your gods are going to be aveng'd, as well as the omission of every good and useful action that others then might have perform'd, had ye not seduc'd them even to delirium, and debas'd them below human nature. While he was speaking, his countenance grew more radiant, and the dead saw its effulgence unveil'd.

After him Enoch arose, and with him a new dawn. The sacred prophet said, While I yet sojourn'd upon earth, as the time when I hop'd for increasing glory but slowly approach'd, I often sought retirement and solitude under the shade of the cedars of the grove. The winds from every region murmur'd, and rustled amid its branches; every surrounding object seem'd to feel that it existed; while I felt that I was heir to immortality. Then, oh! even then, during those blessed moments, I enjoy'd the inexpressible and always novel pleasure of meditating upon the First of Beings; and such was my profound admiration of the object of my contemplations, that my soul recurr'd to it incessantly, and always with fresh enthusiasm. My trembling lips were dumb, and my voice was extinct; I could hardly breathe; the functions of life were arrested. Nevertheless, in a mental ejaculation, proceeding from the very bottom of my soul, I thus express'd my supplications: Who art Thou! Being of Beings? Who art Thou? an Infinite God, the First before all existence, Being without an origin, who wouldst not always remain alone? Oh, sacred love!— Having thus unburthen'd my soul, my voice return'd; my tears flow'd. My Creator! and my God! I was lost in an ecstasy of joy, when I reflected that thou shed'st the fulness of thy presence around me. One day (to

which I shall never refer but with increasing joy), I return'd to him that had created me, but not through the vale of death, but by rising above the grave, even unto God. It is he who has sent me hither to-day, to judge you, ye imaginary wise men, who, proud of your researches, vain of an understanding, which you would not ennoble by consecrating it to God, you have presum'd sufficiently upon your own strength to fancy yourselves capable of rising by your own efforts to immortality! You were puff'd up with the mistaken idea of your own merit, when you had in your mighty wisdom been able, as you thought, to unveil the Being of Beings: when thus wafted upon the wings of illusion, ye even endeavour'd to raise your thoughts towards the most awful mysteries, and fancy'd, that to you it was given entirely to unfold the nature of the divine essence, to adjudge perfections to him who is eternal; measuring him by the human standard, ye pretended to know the God of eternity. Ah! ye would have been wiser, had you remain'd humbly in the dust till, after death, the angel of God had led ye towards the divine mysteries; ye would have done better to have ador'd with pious admiration, Him who, far remov'd above your presumption, was not to be recognis'd in the shadow that you trac'd of such a Being; when, taking advantage of many noble souls, ye led them from the paths of virtue, and prevented them from attaining the great and promis'd reward.

Thus spoke Enoch, the man who walk'd with God (21).

Among those who were summon'd before the seat of judgment (22) were other founders or inventors of sects; they were mix'd among the fabricators of idols, and yet they had been Christians. The elders round the throne examin'd them in silence: not far from them, and the first-born to the celestial inheritance, stood the mother of the Messiah. A floating drapery, spotted with blood, wav'd around her; her modest countenance was emblematical of her gentleness and of her virtues. Follow'd by the silent band, she advanc'd towards the throne. The majestic beauty of her features, animated by the felicity

of beatitude, enchanted and astonish'd my soul (23). Being arriv'd before the Judge, she rais'd her tender, but supplicating, eyes towards him, and fell prostrate, while placing her crown at his feet. The martyrs who accompany'd her follow'd her example, by kneeling before him who chose to die, though eternal. A melodious hallelujah of solemn hymns was heard, and the Redeemer thus express'd himself:—

Arise, my children, and love me as I display'd my love for you, when the blood flow'd from my wounds, before the eyes of Mary—

Who now lightly hovering in all her glory, with arms extended towards the throne of her Son, thus sung, in a voice which enchanted all the risen, and every inhabitant of Heaven:

To Thee, and to Thee only, be eternally sung hosanna! for thou hast died unto sin, and thou hast struck death even to its extinction. The sacred tears which I have often shed, even while enjoying eternal repose, upon finding myself misunderstood by Christians who paid me the same homage which they did to the Son of God! ye are now dried, as ye were shed in pity for their errors; since my highly-adorn'd images are now crumbled to dust, amid the general wreck of nature; and that I now see those profusely ornamented altars overthrown, from whence arose misguided invocations, which never reach'd my ears, but which were heard by him who, always present everywhere, has fix'd upon this decisive day to point out to each their respective places, to separate the souls of the most sublime minds, and the created from the uncreated. May all honour and adoration therefore be paid to thee alone, Sovereign Restorer! May all the crowns be laid, and all the palms be strew'd at the feet of the God who was man! Before the formation of the body, and of the vivifying souls, Thou who didst always exist, Thou didst even then meditate the redemption of those that thou didst consecrate martyrs to thy cause; and also of her who bore thee, whom thou hadst chosen to hear thy last words upon the cross, and

to-day thy divine voice, which is that of the Conqueror, pronouncing our salvation, and separating us from the rejected. Hosanna to the Babe of Bethlehem, to the Sufferer, and to the dying Man, who humbly clos'd his eyes in sleep, the first time in a manger, and the last in the sleep of death upon the cross! All homage to the exalted Supreme, to the Author of our salvation, and of our eternal life! Hosanna to the Most Holy, to the Son of God, who was born of woman!

My vision now presented before my eyes various obscure forms, which rapidly flitted before my eyes, and disappear'd in the same manner. Sometimes I heard the sound of thunder, sometimes that of harps; at others the awful summons, which brought spirits before the throne; but I could not seize the expression of the voices; I merely caught some imperfect sounds; the rest escap'd my ears, amid the rolling of the thunder, as the voice of lamentation is lost amid the general wreck of nature, in a town overwhelm'd by an earthquake. A successive variety of objects incessantly and indistinctly flitted before my sight. Sometimes time fled with rapid strides; sometimes it mov'd heavily forward. I fancy'd that years had elaps'd while these apparitions were passing before me in my vision.

But one scene appear'd very distinctly before me: I very plainly perceiv'd many of those who had been wretched upon earth, receive the reward of their past sufferings; led up by angels, their brows were ornamented with crowns, whose radiance proceeded from the source of all light. These were great and innocent men, noble sufferers, who had patiently endur'd the weight of accumulated misfortunes.

At last, all these indistinct apparitions entirely vanish'd, and my former vision was renew'd.

Suddenly a most terrific phantom rose before me: this was Eternal Death. Never was an immortal spirit, in the full capacity of his thoughts, and in the still greater extent of his feelings, so agitated as my heart was at his horrible aspect. The most dishonour'd sinners, the

shame and reproach of humanity, to whom God swore in his wrath that they were only dust, the bad kings, appear'd, to hear pronounc'd their sentence of death. Neither the thunder from the throne, nor the sound of the last trumpet, summon'd them before the tribunal. It was the lamentable sound of the rattles in the throat, which seem'd to proceed from a field of battle, and the sighs and groans of those expiring sinners whom they had plung'd into misery, by inducing them to acts of criminality. These numerous voices forc'd them to appear before God; their coming resembled the approach of tempestuous clouds.

An unfortunate being, who, without having deviated from the paths of virtue, had, during his lifetime, been reduc'd to the greatest misery by one of these tyrants, rose as a sworn evidence against them, and turning towards the Judge, he thus spoke:

Born in a private station, I was undisturb'd and happy. Heaven had given me three sons: This barbarous and wicked man approach'd my dwelling with deceitful smiles, laden with gold, to corrupt my children, whom fortune had ill treated, that he might render them as abandon'd as himself. I died soon after, and thou didst pass sentence upon them. Most Supreme Judge, do thou now drive their corruptor from thy presence. He has destroy'd my blood, he has beguil'd my children of their innocence, that they might assimilate with him. Do thou, the most Innocent of Men, judge him in his turn; may all the torments of the rejected whom he has seduc'd, be his portion!

Seven martyrs, cover'd with wounds, which cry'd vengeance against their murderers, now rose in all the dazzling brightness of their glory.—

We belong to the hundred and forty and five thousand; your ferocity experience'd a barbarous pleasure, while enjoying the spectacle of our death, and yet we had done no evil. The feather'd chorister of the groves dar'd to raise his voice in honour of his Creator, but we were not permitted to enjoy that satisfaction. The satellites

of your cruel rage pursu'd us, even to the deserted caverns of the mountains, even to the graves of the deceas'd; there, where, cover'd with flowers, water'd by our tears, repos'd the bones of our brethren, repining against the day of days, your barbarous executioners never ceas'd staining their swords with the blood of Christians, till surrounded on all sides by the frightful silence of death; notwithstanding the martyrs, even when expiring under their strokes, forgave their murderers. Terrify'd by these sinister objects, these inhuman wretches fled, fancying that the foliage of the forest, rustling and quivering before the breeze, was a dreadful tempest; and that they saw amid the gloom, wandering and terrific shades. But as for ye, ye great men of the earth! the recollection of these murders did not destroy the voluptuous repose which you enjoy'd upon your flow'ry couches, while drunk with the incense which your cruel flatterers continually pour'd into your ears. But now raise your eyes! here are all those whom you have murder'd; turn your eyes also, (if you can sustain the sight of the all-powerful terror of the Divinity)—turn your eyes upon the first-born of the martyrs—his name is Jesus. You have heard him thus nam'd upon earth; you might then, when he did not as yet hold the thunder in his hand, listen to this beneficent name, now repeated with terror in the vast extent of Heaven.

Thus spoke these witnesses, cover'd with glorious wounds.

After them came a good king, whose eyes sparkled with a pleasing sensation of joy; turning towards the righteous who surrounded him, he said—

How can I express the holy peace and the felicity which now fills my heart? How can I give you an idea of the value of that solemn reward which I have obtain'd, for having given the reins to my humanity, and for not having suffer'd myself to be blinded by the dazzling lustre of my greatness? nor did I ever forget that I was merely dust, and as subject to death as were those

I govern'd. Blessed be those sweet and fortunate moments when my heart, which always melted at the sight of the misery of my fellow-creatures, prompted me to exercise my charity towards them, by relieving their wants, and lessening their misery: how gratifying to read their thanks in their moisten'd eyes! this was of itself a sufficient reward; but their prayers have obtain'd me a never-fading crown, and my Sovereign Lord, as boundless in his gifts as in his essence, still increases my happiness, to which he has plac'd no bounds, since I look forward to eternity.

At this moment, one of the rejected rais'd his head from the dust in which he had been overthrown by his sentence, and extending his hand towards the kings, he thus depos'd against them:—My life was a tissue of crimes, and now I am a condemn'd sinner. I have deny'd the superiority of the soul, which has rais'd these righteous men above the slime of the earth; but I now find that ye were the most abject of the human race, the most impious of all the sons of men, while sin reign'd upon the earth, while conscience only held her tribunal in your hearts, and while ye were deaf to her voice; but in this day of vengeance, she can no longer be stifled. Thus spoke the rejected soul.

Already had the seraphim Eloa arm'd himself with exterminating terrors; vengeance inflam'd his eyes: he unravell'd an open scroll, the sheets of which floated in the highest heaven. The roaring of the tempest is next heard, and Eloa said, There is no standard by which to fix the weight of your calamities, no figures by which they can be calculated, no words by which they can be express'd. It has been your misfortune to have been created, since misery and perdition will henceforth be the portion of your souls! You have basely profan'd the most august dignity upon earth; angels were, after your demise, to have welcom'd you, in the name of the King of kings, with acclamations of joy, and with tears of gratitude; for you were plac'd in very elevated situations; nations were assembled round your thrones; your

theatre was very extensive; and had you acted nobly and humanely, you would have render'd it great and glorious. The Heavens had their eyes upon you; but they turn'd them away in disgust, when they saw your actions; when they saw those bloody wars, the reproach of human nature in every age, and which excite the insulting and ferocious mirth of Hell; when they saw those insolent favourites cringing round you, who merely wish'd to lull your better faculties to sleep, and to render you incapable of either drying the tears of the wretched, or of rewarding the virtuous.

Go then, thou (24) whose ears were forever tickled by the flattering promises of immortality, well you have obtain'd it; but it is not of that species that you expected; your names will be immortalis'd, 'tis true, because they will be continually repeated, coupled with the most savage imprecations which the vilest among the souls plung'd in the lowest gulphs of hell can devise: your actions will be engrav'd in strokes of fire, upon the immense circumference of the brazen mountains of hell, that ye may all recognize yourselves, to your eternal shame: there, where no temple of memory exists, where no laurels grow to crown your heads, where no songs of triumph will be sung by those who, with the basest adulation, overwhelm'd you with unmerited honours, and who, to celebrate every delusion of your pride, rais'd arches of triumph to your honour; but there you will hear the cry of lamentation, and terrible and mourning voices, arising from the blood which you have shed, and the imprecations of those whom you doom'd to more novel and more cruel tortures, which will resound among the highest mountains, and amidst the stupendous ridge of rocks, which will hang suspended, like the tottering superstructure of a bridge, whose arches are in a mouldering, ruinous state, in the most threatening posture, over your heads, which will be shrouded in everlasting night: thus will you always be devoted to fresh punishments. May the clouds which surround the throne be arm'd with their destructive thunder! may the angels of

death descend with pitiless steps!—and let all the condemn'd raise their eyes towards the throne, for the divine hand has seiz'd the scales; and soon, very soon, the one will rise to Heaven, while the other will sink even to Hell: thus spoke Eloa. A terrific and general silence now extended itself over all the universe.

The arraigning look of the Judge was holy, majestic, and terrible; it beam'd with his mighty power, and with his indignation; he lower'd his eyes upon the kings, then turn'd them away in silence. At the moment he turn'd from them, the earth trembled from afar, under the feet of these monarchs: a frightful tempest arose from the throne, and from amidst the most opaque gloom, the angels of death came forth. The kings fled in terror, but not even an earthquake in pity conceals them from the piercing looks and hasty approach of the angels of death. Quick as thought we saw the place vacant where the criminals had been condemn'd; we heard the gates of hell open and reclose, and instantly the angels of death re-appear'd upon the firmament, surrounding the field of justice, bearing heavy thunderbolts, and singing hymns of joy.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XIX.

The Argument.

The muse of Sion relates how Adam is interrupted in his narration respecting the last judgment, by the emotion he feels at the sight of Eve, imploring pardon of the Judge for her posterity. The sentence of those priests who were the proud depreciators of the actions of men. Abbadona, having consider'd the effect of divine justice, requests annihilation from the hands of the Judge: at the moment when he believes that his fatal prayer has been granted, the Saviour calls him to salvation. The righteous of our globe, who have been declared in a state of grace, and those of the interior worlds, ascend to Heaven. Adam concludes the recital of his vision, at the transformation of the earth into another Eden. Jesus appears upon the banks of the sea of Tiberias, more than five hundred miles from Galilee, where they are celebrating the last supper, and singing hymns. Jesus appears to James alone; and then to the other eleven apostles; and to the seventy-two disciples, in the Forest of Palms. John sees in a dream the effect of the descent of the Holy Ghost. Thaddeus displays the greatest sensibility, as the moment of his separation from Jesus draws near, who is preparing for his ascension. Jesus again joins his disciples at Gethsemane, and leads them to the Mount of Olives, where the celestial train are assembled. Lazarus, who is now glorified, is conducted thither by his angel. Jesus blesses his disciples, and ascends to Heaven.

THE

MESSIAH.

BOOK XIX.

THE father of the human race was silent, respecting one of the scenes which had been unfolded to him during his vision of the awful day of judgment. In the midst of the numerous and thick ranks of an army of risen, which extended further than the eye could reach, he perceiv'd Eve standing upon an eminence, whose hair wav'd over her shoulders, whose arms were extended, and whose countenance was all animation; while she cried in the most melting and most affectionate tone that had ever reach'd the ears of either men or angels, Pardon! she smil'd through her tears, while she implor'd forgiveness for her children—the pardon of their judge! But this affecting scene soon disappear'd; and he merely continued to hear the soft, but interrupted sounds of the celestial lyres, which seem'd to him to be sometimes expressive of pity, sometimes of joy; but these also ceas'd, and his vision continued.

Appearing to rouse himself from his abstraction, Adam thus proceeded with his narrative:—I next saw the mowers (1) with their scythes, ascend and descend amidst the ranks of the hosts which they slowly travers'd, severely and attentively examining each individual: they then cried, Come! and led those whom they had call'd towards the throne of justice. They were intermix'd like the confused thoughts of man, and as dumb as the statues which grac'd the mausoleums of the great, while there were yet monuments: a seraphim was sent to-

wards them; he gravely advanc'd to meet them, and issu'd this order of the Supreme Being.

Fall prostrate with all due humiliation, and listen to your sentence; it will be similar to that which was mentally, and in trembling, pronounc'd upon you by the righteous, during your short span of life, when they compar'd you to themselves.—I now, alas! perceiv'd many of these miserable wretches turn pale, and sink to the earth, where they clung to the ruins of the rocks. The seraphim retir'd in silence; then rose with all the dazzling brightness of the purest virtue, and with all the majesty of that sublime religion, whose holiness he had fervently acknowledged, even before his decease, the best of the disciples, the most worthy to be belov'd, the pious St. John. The elders immediately surrounded him; while he advanc'd to unmask the proud, now miserably extended upon the field of justice, and to disclose their most secret actions: he enter'd into no details; neither did he dwell upon the number, or the greatness of their crimes: he merely display'd to them the fate which they have provok'd by their iniquities; or silenced the threatening cloud, which is ready to overwhelm them. Thus spoke St. John.

You have created for yourselves virtues of your own, and you have plac'd these idols above the throne of the law of the judge, and the voice of your conscience was deaf to the divine precepts. The holy men who always trod the path prescrib'd to them by the Eternal, nevertheless found it necessary continually to implore the divine mercy, because they knew and acknowledg'd the power of God, and never thought themselves sufficiently pure; but you fancied you were perfect, and were not requir'd to adopt the belief of the great redemption.

The noble ambition which led you to seek the road to honour, you degraded by suffering it to degenerate into pride. You dared to judge with severity those who were better than yourselves: the simple of heart; the wise who penetrated further than you did into the

labyrinth of duties the most painful to fulfil, those who were animated by a zealous regard for virtue, which nourish'd their fervour; it was they whom, in your delirium, ye judg'd severely: you dar'd, profane as you were, to appreciate in the same degree the virtue which delights in humbling itself, and that which is merely humble in appearance, which assumes its dazzling lustre, and its name in the palace of kings, or in the highest stations of ideal greatness upon earth: you were the architects of your own felicity, as of temples suited to your taste, which rested upon very deceitful foundations, and not upon sacred duties: you sometimes, it is true, mention'd a Providence; but you plac'd more faith in the ways of men, and in your own actions: you led away from the purpose for which you were form'd, the very superior minds by which you were by nature gifted: you often confounded the tones of the rudest austerity with the harmony of those which are inspir'd by the noble, gentle, and pious feelings of humanity: your actions often betray'd your most secret thoughts; but in your own heart all was darkness: peace was never found an abiding place in your souls, in consequence of your having entirely forgiven your enemies, and of your having secretly blessed them: how then could they who were not pure in the eyes of God expect the crown of immortality? they who, in their moments of terror or reflection, were not pure even in the opinion of their own conscience, when the convincing certainty of their own weakness was uppermost in their minds, which they could not (however they might impose upon others) conceal from themselves; yet they did not have recourse to the Supreme Redeemer; they trusted to the vain hope, the delirium of their own merit, and hoped to be sav'd by their own virtue. Unfortunate, tranquil sinners! it was thus that they became criminal! Could the last day alone, arm'd with all its terrors, recall ye to your recollection? Every succeeding moment, during your short life, ought to have convinc'd you, that beyond the tomb there was another Judge besides yourselves. Arise, and

remark the happy repose which those whom you heretofore condemn'd now enjoy. Consider the reward which you have forfeited, since another road than the one you pursu'd led towards it: humility, humanity, and fervent prayer, have brought these conquerors to the goal: never did you, like them, devote your nights to the rapturous employment of addressing your vows to Heaven; never did you, like them, exert yourselves for the benefit of the unfortunate: you have disdain'd to participate in one of the greatest pleasures which either men or angels ever enjoy, that of having only the eye of Heaven to witness our good actions; that of feeling ourselves better and more happy, because the multitude remain'd in ignorance of the meritorious actions we had perform'd. Your thoughts were never sufficiently employ'd upon God, upon the first of Beings, upon the most High; that is why you slept smiling in false security, without ever attaining that real peace which arises from the tears of repentance, and which flow to obtain that inestimable favour, for which we are indebted to the blood and tears of our Mediator.—When St. John ceas'd speaking, the scales of justice resounded; the lightest did not absolutely touch the beam: a mist veil'd the destiny of those who were judg'd; but utter darkness did not reign amongst them (2). Possibly some day a joyful light may shine upon them.

The host to the left of the Judge were in the greatest consternation: the angels of death were descending from the throne, to conduct the rejected to the abode of eternal darkness; they carried with them the terror of the look with which the Heavenly Judge pronounc'd their sentence: a thousand stormy clouds roll'd behind them, and follow'd their rapid flight.

Silent, like one forsaken, with half-clos'd eyes fix'd upon the gulphs below, stood Abbadona: one of the angels of death drew nearer him, every succeeding moment: he saw and recogniz'd the cherubim, and prepar'd himself to die: he nevertheless rais'd his haggard eyes towards the Sovereign Judge, whom he now invokes

with all the fervour of which his soul is capable: the Judge from his throne, and all the sons of the earth, consider him. Since all is finish'd, exclaim'd the suppliant seraphim, and since to this last of days is to succeed the night of eternity, deign to suffer me, oh! thou who art seated upon thy throne, to dare once more to raise towards thee my eyes, suffus'd in tears, which have flow'd since the creation of the earth! thou who didst thyself suffer, deign from thy throne, upon which thou reposest, to cast thine eyes upon us, miserable, condemn'd wretches! the most forsaken and abandon'd of all created beings! I do not implore thee to forgive me; I merely ask for death at thy hands: most merciful God, once man, see me clasp this rock; here will I remain, when the angels of death drag the condemn'd from the presence of God! Seize, oh! Son of God, one of those thousand all-powerful thunderbolts which surround thee, and by thy loving mercy, which is to-day manifested towards such a number of sinners, strike me dead! I was created by thee with the righteous; suffer me now to die: expunge from the creation the spectacle of my horrible desolation: suffer Abbadona to be for ever forgotten: may the creation cease for me! suffer me to leave void the space occupy'd by the most wretched, and the most abandon'd of all created beings! But thy bolt delays to fall; thou dost not listen to my prayer. Ah! if I must live, let me be separated from the rejected: suffer me to remain alone upon this dark field of justice, since it will afford me great consolation, to be able, while profoundly meditating, to extend my eyes on every side, and to say to myself, There, upon that throne, sat the Son, cover'd with glorious wounds; there, upon the most dazzling clouds, were plac'd the righteous; and here I was tried. While speaking these words, Abbadona sunk upon the rock.

The angels of death were disposing themselves for a rapid flight, while turning their eyes towards the Judge. The human race maintain'd a profound silence: the thunder, which so lately hoarsely murmur'd around the

throne, entirely ceas'd. Abbadona suddenly awoke from his lethargic trance, with a more poignant sensation of immortality: the voice of the Judge resounds through the attentive Heavens, and reaches even him, who listened in awful silence to these words:—

Abbadona, I didst create thee; I am well acquainted with all my creatures; I see the worm before it crawls; the seraphim before he experiences any feeling; I can penetrate into all thy thoughts, and into every secret fold of thy heart; but thou didst rebel against me, and these condemn'd wretches, whom thou didst concur in seducing, bear witness against thee, as they are immortal.

Abbadona rose, and extending towards Heaven his clasped hands, he exclaim'd, Oh! if thou dost know me, if thou hast deign'd to bestow the slightest degree of commiseration upon the most wretched of all the angels, if thou hast deign'd to consider the eternal duration of my sufferings, oh! suffer thy thunder to strike me! may thy pity induce thee to put forth the strength of thy arm to annihilate me at the foot of thy throne! Holy Mediator, whenever I reflect that I am indebted to thee for an existence, of which I was so unworthy, I sink confounded into the most horrid gulphs of the dreadful abyss, and my trembling and discourag'd soul calls upon death, and flies the prospect of eternity. From the height of thy tribunal, cast a merciful look upon my deplorable situation! once more, only once more before I am entirely exterminated from the creation, suffer me to dwell upon the consoling, the grand idea of having been the work of the hands of the best of Beings. Before I for ever lose the faculty of thinking, I salute thee as my God and my Creator. When the Heavens, being completed, mov'd in the immensity of space, amidst the harmony of their first rejoicings offer'd up to their Creator, when after their formation the angels found themselves all inspir'd by the grandest sentiments, the knowledge of the Author of their being; when the Divinity, till then solitary and alone, disco-

ver'd himself to myriads of his creatures, such as he had been to all eternity; then was I created by my Judge. In my first happy state of existence, I was a stranger to misfortune; no sorrows blunted the perfection of my mind. Amongst all those whom I chose for the objects of my love, God appear'd to me the most worthy to be belov'd: eternal salvation then cover'd me with its protecting wings; each succeeding view which open'd to my mind, seem'd the forerunner of my future beatification. In my enthusiasm, I could only rejoice to think that I existed; I liv'd to be belov'd by the most excellent of beings; I measur'd the duration of my life by the standard of eternity, and reckon'd my happy days by the innumerable instances of divine mercy, of which I was the object; and now I must perish!—must cease to be! Never again shall I with profound admiration contemplate God! never again shall I sing hallelujah before the throne of the Son!—Well then, immortal soul, thou wilt be annihilated; the end of thy creation is fulfill'd.—For the last time, I again adore thee, oh Thou who, before the people of innumerable ages, has plac'd me upon this obscure, but dreadful eminence, that I might appear from thence as a witness, first of your mercy, then of your inexorable vengeance.

As he pronounc'd these words, Abbadona fell prostrate before the Judge, in expectation of death. A profound and solemn silence reign'd, both in heaven and upon earth. I rais'd my eyes towards the highest heavens, and I saw the saints trembling upon their golden thrones, in awful expectation of what was to follow. The angels of death, in front of the rejected, surrounded Abbadona, with inflam'd countenances, though motionless, and veil'd by opaque clouds; but turning from him, they fix'd their eyes upon the throne of the Judge.

Here the father of mankind paus'd; when he again resum'd his narrative, he appear'd to the saints as if he had awoke a second time from the sleep of death, while he said—At last, a voice, issuing from the throne, mild and benignant, like unto the voice of an affectionate pa-

rent, and which resembled in sound the rejoicing of the blessed, cry'd—

Abbadona, come unto thy Saviour.

Adam again paus'd; when his voice return'd, these words escap'd him, with the promptitude of flame when driven before the wind:

With the rapidity with which pious thoughts ascend to heaven, when carried upon the wings of the wind which bears the Eternal on his way, so darted Abbadona across the heavens towards the throne; the beauty of his holy youth reappear'd in his supplicating eyes, now fix'd upon his God, and the benign repose of immortality was again visible upon his seraphic features. None of us in the days of resurrection (3) appear'd, when rising from the dust, as Abbadona now appear'd. Abdiel was no longer able to contain himself, when his looks met those of the approaching Abbadona; he pass'd through the crowd of the faithful, rush'd, with extended arm, towards heaven, his joy declaring itself by his lively exclamations; his countenance was all animation, and his crown emitted an harmonious sound; he hastily descended towards Abbadona, and caught him in his strict embrace.

His friend tore himself from his encircling arms, to prostrate himself at the feet of his Judge. At this moment the whole concave of heaven resounded with tears of rapture: these were succeeded by the softest accents of joy. From the seats of the four-and-twenty elders, even to the throne of the eternal Son, the most harmonious harps sung the dead return'd to life. But how shall I repeat to you the words of Abbadona, when he rose before the throne! and that, while addressing him who was seated upon it, he said, with the enchanting smile of eternal life—

Oh! by what solemn name, by what acts of adoration, shall I designate thee, oh Thou who hast exercis'd such mercy towards me? Children of light (4), whom I have so tenderly lov'd, first born of the creation, and ye inheritors of eternal life, through the merits of the wounds of the Son I come back to ye, oh! whither am I

return'd? Tell me, oh! tell me, who call'd me? Whose was that voice proceeding from the throne, which drew me towards it, by pronouncing my name?—Thou art the Source of Life, the Plenitude of Greatness, the uncreated Son of the Father; thy name is Salvation—Light of lights; Mediator of the covenant, sacrific'd Lamb, Saviour! Thou art also Judge; but I will give thee names of love. In the evening of the day of judgment, God once more created me: for I was one of those doom'd to eternal death. But he withdrew me from the shades of death, and re-created me for eternal salvation, as ineffable as he is himself. May a solemn hallelujah to the First of Beings be eternally chanted to thee in my behalf; for thou hast said to misery, Cease to be; and to my tears, I have number'd thee. Henceforth and evermore, may tears of joy, gratitude, and of adoration, flow in honour of Him who is seated upon the throne!

My vision was now disturb'd by dusky figures, which seem'd to skim and hover in the air, and then to disappear in the immensity of the heavens. At last, all these appearances vanish'd, and a clearer view was afforded me; but since I was last permitted to see what was passing at the present time, it appear'd to me that some years had elaps'd.

The throne, whose dazzling brightness had ceas'd to be terrific, shed its rays all over the field of resurrection; from the most extensive distance which my eye had ever been able to reach, I perceiv'd advancing towards heaven, hosts of the victorious. I merely recogniz'd those who were without the crowd; these were those first children of the earth who perish'd when it was overflow'd (6), when the scales of God reverberated, and the souls of those who had inherited the mortality of Adam, having been weigh'd, they sank into a gloomy prison; but they were now freed from their chains, and ascended towards heaven with the conquerors. I follow'd these happy beings with my eyes and with my blessings, when suddenly a thunderbolt fell behind me.

Instantly I perceiv'd this earth was transform'd: angels of the Most High! and ye mortals born! I saw this globe, which had once labour'd under so heavy a curse, transform'd into a second Eden. As I was drawn from the clay of the earth, so did the terrestrial globe, rising anew from its ashes, become a delicious Eden. The creation resounded with the wonder, the stars shone with a more effulgent brightness; I still heard the thunder, the precursor of this new creation, and the rays of heaven still beam'd before my delighted eyes, when I return'd to you after my vision (7).

Jesus having descended from the Tabor, stopp'd upon the borders of the sea of Tiberias, having on either side of him hosts of angels, who were invisible to mortals: they were his messengers to and from other worlds, who either render'd him an account of their various missions, or receiv'd his precise orders, which were to regulate the fates of those different worlds; they went and came, and were the bearers of commands, which excited their surprise, and which will also excite ours, when the veil of our first life shall be rais'd, and when the souls of now-buried mortals shall rove over the ethereal plains.

The morning dew had evaporated; the dazzling rays of the rising sun were temper'd by a slight mist, which seem'd like a transparent veil, woven out of white vapour. The silence of repose, and the soft breath of zephyrs, pervaded the adjacent plains; a small vessel, mann'd by the friends, was indistinctly perceiv'd through the grey-tinted mist, which veil'd the increasing brilliancy of the dawn, as it glided along the water; upon the deck of this fishing-boat, watching the nets, stood Simon Peter, who was surrounded by the silver-headed Bartholomew, and by Thaddeus, who lean'd upon an oar, by the two twins, whose features were animated by the most lively joy, as were those of Nathaniel, who was also there (8); by his side stood the sons of Zebedee: the thoughts of James soar'd towards heaven; those of John dwell'd on Christ upon earth.

When they drew near the shore, they perceiv'd the

Messiah, but without, as yet, recognizing him; yet they felt inclin'd to honour the venerable stranger, who, at this early hour, seem'd quietly to hold sweet communion with his own mind.

Of all the pilgrims, said James, whom the idolators of Greece, and the inhabitants of the banks of the Nile, have permitted to come amongst us, to celebrate the feast of the passover, and to join in the hymns in the temple, I saw no one whose countenance bespoke such a loftiness of soul, as does that of this stranger.

To him Didimus. Oh! if it were one of the pilgrims of the resurrection who thus presents himself to our view this morning, that he may appear to us more effulgent than the finest day—nay, than even the sun in all its meridian glory! Thou dost consider him, Thaddeus, with the most anxious curiosity, and the most scrutinizing looks.

Thaddeus thus reply'd: Yes, I perceive in him the distinguishing features of a mortal, who already belongs to heaven. I am in momentary expectation of his taking flight at the moment of his transformation, which may perhaps be so rapid, he may elude my vigilance.

But the stranger now accosted them, saying, Children, have ye any thing to eat?

They had not taken any fish during the night; the unknown therefore said to them, Cast your nets on the right side of your boat, and you will have better success. They did so, and now they were unable to draw up the net for the multitude of fishes. Thomas and Thaddeus, whose bosoms now glow'd with the highest expectations, fix'd their attentive looks upon the unknown; but their unexpected success in fishing, in consequence of their having obey'd the stranger's orders, led John to discover he was the Messiah, and with transport he exclaim'd—It is the Lord!

Simon Peter hearing these words, seiz'd his tunic, and casting himself into the sea, he swam away in haste, to be again near his Saviour, whom he now sees, and recognizes. The others now, with all their might, having drawn the net full of fishes into the boat, were no

sooner landed, than they also, with silent joy, recognis'd the Messiah; and they saw a fire of coals on the shore, and fish laid thereon, and bread. The Mediator now said to them, Bring also of the fish which ye have now caught.

Simon Peter instantly jump'd into the water, and drew the net to land, which did not break, though it was full of large fish, which were brought alive upon the strand; and Jesus said to his disciples, Come and eat. They gather'd round him. Jesus seated himself with a friendly air familiarly amongst them, and he himself help'd these happy mortals to fish and bread.

Since the sorrowful repast which they had partaken of together before his death, this was the second that he had partaken with them in joy. When they had finish'd, they walk'd upon the strand. The Man of God said to Peter—Simon, son of Jonas, dost thou love me better than these do?—Peter instantly drew near him, and reply'd—Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. Then Jesus kindly said to him, Feed my lambs. Shortly after, the Messiah again ask'd him—Simon, son of Jonas, dost thou love me? Peter, though he did not display his sorrow, was griev'd to the very heart by this second question, but reply'd—Lord, thou knowest I love thee. And Jesus resum'd, with the same kindness—Feed my sheep. Jesus now stopt suddenly, and again inquir'd—Simon, son of Jonas, dost thou love me? Peter was now griev'd to the very soul at his Master's having ask'd him three times whether he lov'd him, and he reply'd in a moving tone, Thou know'st every thing, Lord; thou know'st that I love thee. Well, said the Lord, feed my sheep. When thou wast young, thou guidedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not go. Follow me.

The disciple understood how he ought to follow him, and by what death he was to glorify God, as a witness of his resurrection.

Peter, upon turning round, saw the well-belov'd disciple approaching, who, during the sorrowful farewell supper, had lean'd upon the bosom of the Messiah; and Peter seeing him, said to Jesus—Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus reply'd, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me (9). Then the risen from the dead disappear'd from before the eyes of his disciples.

As the waves of the sea rise and fall, and break over each other, so did their discourse, respecting him who had appear'd, break in upon each other.—Yes, I shall follow him, said Simon, I shall die as he died: girded, conducted, and led to slaughter, I shall die as he died; but thou, John, thou art not to die; thou art immortal.

Yes, thou art immortal, cried James, raising his eyes to heaven in the fullness of his joy.

Me immortal! resum'd John; he did not say that.

If I will that he tarry till I come—what else does that signify? said Thaddeus.—Oh, thou well-belov'd disciple! thou art immortal: such is the reward, the crown which he has bestow'd upon thee, in return for thy fidelity. It is a single example; thou art doubly bless'd, thou favourite of God, by this inestimable gift. Yet I feel a degree of uneasiness: we shall die, we shall return to the Messiah; art thou to tarry behind? But——No, he will be with his elect, even during the consummation of ages, both in heaven and on earth. John, thou wilt not die.

They now all return'd to their different occupations, while their minds dwell'd upon a future state; they row'd here and there, and in the joy of their hearts, they distributed the fish, which fill'd their nets, among the other fishermens' boats, who had, like them, been sailing about all night to no purpose.

The stars pursu'd their course, and still our Saviour remain'd upon his first judgment-seat. His sentences were brief; but they reach'd the guilty with the rapidity of lightning, or penetrated the hearts of the chosen with the most lively joy.

The news of the resurrection of the Messiah, and of his having appear'd to his disciples, was already spread abroad, as was also the descent of the heavenly witnesses to the abode of mortals. It was also known that he, whose existence and resurrection even the dead proclaim'd, was going into Galilee, to shew himself again. Friends ran reciprocally to inform each other, that those who hop'd to witness the glory of his expected appearance were assembling upon the Tabor. They remain, said they, under the shade of the cedars, without either quenching their thirst at the stream, or breaking of bread. These messengers hastily spread this news, as they proceeded from one abode to another—The Divinity, said they, will once more appear to us; he has promis'd to grant us this favour. Several of the risen said to some of the faithful who were penetrated with gratitude, Hasten to the Tabor, if you wish, even here below, to enjoy a foretaste of the joys of Heaven.

Lazarus continued upon the mountain under the shade of the cedars, and said, He certainly means that a great number should participate in the happiness of seeing him, else he would not thus delay his appearance. As yet we are but two hundred assembled here; and he wishes to favour many more with his presence; he wishes that the rays which issue from his throne should diffuse their light to a distance, and proclaim the dawn of the day of his entrance into eternity. Let us then hope, my brethren, that we shall share in this abundance of heavenly blessings; let us persevere in his ways, as do those beatified saints above: let us praise his name, and sing to the Divine Son, not the psalms of the temple, but the hymns of the inheritors of his kingdom: let him who feels himself inspir'd by a celestial fire, celebrate the Messiah, that those who came to enjoy his appearance may find us occupied in singing his praises; and that Jesus, when he does appear, may be receiv'd with joyful and new songs of praise.

Then the mother of the victorious over death thus began—I have learnt from Eve (if she did not too much

honour a mortal) some tunes of those joyful hymns which are sung before the throne; but it can only be with the voice of a mortal, with that of his brethren upon earth, that I can sing the glory of the Most Exalted: do thou join with me, thou who open'd thy eyes to the light upon the plains of Magdala.

Me, cried Mary Magdalen, me sing hymns with the mother of the Most High! me, who have never been consecrated by a holy flame! shall I dare to give utterance to the praises of the Son of the Eternal! will I from afar follow the example of his mother, because I love him! Thou hast heard the angels' songs of triumph, while hov'ring over the manger. Eve has taught thee some heavenly hymns;-and thou art the mother of the Divine Man; but I love him as tenderly. Begin, thou mother of him who is ris'n from the dead. Miriam, raising her eyes to Heaven, seiz'd the psaltery, and soon the strings, bending under her gentle touch, pour forth the most melodious sounds.

Mary thus began: When the angels sung round the stable at Bethlehem, they shed tears like infants newly born; but the hallelujah of the celestial concert became more animated when they saw the tears of the Holy Child also flow.

Mary Magdalen thus went on: He whose compassionate tears flow'd at Bethlehem, he who listen'd with kindness to the praises of the heavenly spirits, saw me prostrate at his feet, penetrated with sincere repentance, and he took pity on me.

Mary resum'd: It was no longer tears, but the bloody sweat of anguish which our Divine Redeemer shed at Gethsemane; but then this blood cried aloud, Pardon for us sinners!

Mary Magdalen continu'd: When he look'd at Jerusalem, he shed tears over that city; he wish'd to have assembled its inhabitants, as a hen assembles her chickens under her wings; but they have refus'd his kind invitations, they have rejected his love, and they cried under the porches at Gabbatha, May his blood rest upon us,

and upon our children! Alas! this blood has flow'd even for them upon the altar of Golgotha, for those who had condemn'd him. Did not they then turn away their eyes, and seek relief from their terror in flight? Did not a hollow dismal rumbling proclaim the alarm of Hell? Did not he then fulfil the oath that he had pledg'd to the Eternal, when he said, I will save mankind? and since he bow'd his head in death upon the cross, has not God crown'd this all-perfect Restorer with honour and glory? Ah! my eyes are rais'd with delight upon the grandeur which he enjoys; yet I often revert them towards the bloody altar, and mourn over him whose head, crown'd in derision with thorns, was bow'd down upon the Calvary. Come then, exclaim'd Mary, thou who art no longer burthen'd with that ignominious crown upon that bloody mount, nor cover'd by the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, come! we are overcome with joy, and by the uneasiness of the expectation of seeing thee again!

Come, cried Mary Magdalen, oh! thou who raisest the dead, who hast brought life again upon earth, reanimated by the blessings of thy Father, oh, come! we seek thee in the plain, in the firmament, and upon the surrounding eminences, with looks of affection, of desire, and of expectation. Oh! come to the first assembly of the faithful, as with eyes sparkling with joy, and a countenance glowing with the blushes of innocence, the bride expects the bridegroom; so art thou expected by this first assembly. Oh! thou who hast ris'n to reanimate in future ages the deceas'd from amongst our descendants; ye who will succeed to the first inheritance, perform your pilgrimage courageously, even unto the grave. The master of your lives will reanimate you: pursue your road, bearing in your hand the flow'rs of the harvest; and let your mouths be fill'd with his praise: let it be thus ye advance towards the graves of your fathers.

Here Mary Magdalen interrupted her song, by joyfully exclaiming, Ah! the number of this, our first assembly, still increases. Do not you perceive the crowds

which are pouring forth from every path which leads towards the holy hill? The staffs of these pilgrims seem to move with increasing rapidity at every step which leads them nearer to happiness, and the clouds of dust seem to thicken under their feet! Fortunate people! the number of these elect of Christ is continually increasing; and they are hastily approaching to see once more the glorified of God.

Nevertheless Miriam again sweeps the cords of her psaltery to accompany this hymn.—Oh, Father! glorify him with such a dazzling lustre, that this primæval society may experience the delight which is the portion of the celestials! Suffer them to see the face of the Son of God! suffer them to inhale large draughts from the torrent of his light; and that thus refresh'd and strengthen'd, they may require no other support, when the swords of tyrants shall be pointed at their breasts, and may be enabled to walk with a firm step towards the most cruel death, that they may bear witness for the Son in their last words! and do not suffer them, when approaching the term of their existence, to be overcome by lengthen'd torments; but oh! Most Merciful! may their blood be speedily shed, that it may the sooner address thee in their favour!

Mary Magdalen thus resum'd:—If I am also fated to bear glorious witness of the purity of thy faith, if I am thought worthy to follow in this bloody road to the grave, do not forsake me, while slowly fainting under my agony; the smallest consolation from thee will then suffice me.

Such might certainly suffice thee, rejoin'd Mary; but they would not suffice him, who has shewn himself too generously compassionate towards thee, not to grant thee the most superabundant favour, should he call upon thee to become a martyr in his cause: no torments will be sufficiently rigorous to efface from thy remembrance that heavenly voice which call'd thee Mary, and to prevent thee from falling prostrate before him; then he will not be laid in the tomb, he will be seated upon the throne of

his glory; he, at whose feet you will fall prostrate, will then reign at the right of his father.

Lord, who hast lov'd us since the beginning of the world, cried Mary Magdalen, mayst thou then grant me the fullness of thy grace! and now, oh! thou, after whom my soul pants, appear, oh! Saviour, to our longing eyes, and fortify the martyrs, that they may pursue their bloody career, till having reach'd the goal, the crowns prepar'd for their reward shall sparkle before their eyes. Thus sung Mary, and Mary Magdalen.

Angels, and many of the risen from the dead, were assembled round them, the numbers of which were continually increasing. Eloa, leaning upon his golden harp, listen'd to the songs of the mother of Christ. David hover'd over her head, and drew nearer every moment, to hear more distinctly the melting and sweet accents of this holy woman. The righteous who, from afar, had heard the sound of her voice, hasten'd towards her, saying, With what soft satisfaction does she praise the Heavenly Restorer! Perhaps she already catches a glimpse of him upon one of the eminences of the Tabor: perhaps he is advancing towards her from beyond those cedars; but they could not see him.

The faithful, who were already arriv'd, were soon follow'd by many others, and by the seventy disciples. All those who had formerly abandon'd him, now advanc'd, shedding torrents of tears: with them came a number of lame, blind, and deaf, whom Christ had cur'd, and of the deceas'd, whom he had recall'd to life. Besides these, came Beor, Dilean, Joel, Samma, and Elkannah; these were follow'd by Bersebon and Bethoron, and by angels and cherubims, who were invisible, as well as the crowns of martyrdom, which they wore. Next came Tabitha, Stephen, Joses, and Portia; by the side of these, walk'd Nepthoa, who playfully strew'd the buds of flowers, and early leaves, along her path; frequently looking at her with an expressive smile; and at last he thus address'd her:—

Portia, *such is the road to Heaven*; and I am the an-

gel who leads thee thither. Tears of rapture bath'd the cheeks of Portia: she was not a mother; yet a child, upon the point of reaching the tabernacles of eternity, conducted her towards her Redeemer. She reply'd, Child, the road to Heaven is very delightful; and I love the angel who leads me along.

I also love thee very much; but a day will dawn, during which I shall love thee still more; when having reach'd the termination of our flowery road, we shall be shaded by other cedars, and other palm-trees, and where we shall enjoy an eternal spring.

Nicodemus and Joseph, having listen'd to their discourse, join'd them, saluting them with the salutation of peace, that of Christ, when he discover'd himself to his disciples. They then together drew near Mary Magdalen, and the mother of the Mediator. Miriam consider'd the Pagan; and was transported with joy, upon perceiving that the Messiah had already call'd her towards the road to Heaven: and thus she again sounded the harp of the new Jerusalem:—

Son of the Father, continually dost thou augment the host of the blessed, and of the inheritors of eternal life. To-day thou assemblest a great number to see thee deliver'd from the bondage of death. The new covenant with Salem shall be founded upon the holy mountains; it will reach their summits, which toucheth even the stars. Yes, my eyes can pierce into futurity: the rising is ravishing to behold: it is also delightful to mark the progress of time, and to foresee what will proceed from this weak source, to see this small body multiplying and increasing, and spreading everywhere like an immense army. Oh! thou Most Majestic! what was the beginning of thy manifestations? Thou didst first appear to a weak mortal, whose sighs rose even unto thee; then at different times thou didst appear to thy sublime apostles, who are doom'd to bondage and martyrdom, to fortify their minds before they take the field, where, like thee, they will be loaded with opprobrium, and to pre-

pare them for the reward of sitting in judgment with thee.

The tree that will lead to the knowledge of God, which will flourish and extend its revivifying shade over every nation, is to grow out of this little society: thou dost now then accomplish all things. Son of Heaven, who didst offer thyself from the beginning, and who wert consecrated for the redemption, long before the creation of man, and of these hosts, angels of God, the vail of the temple is rent before the Most Holy: lay your crowns at the feet of him who has fulfill'd his divine mission: lower your palms at the approach of Jesus Christ, the great Finisher, and sing the hallelujah of the thousand times thousands of celestial spirits. Mary, lost in ecstacy, suffer'd her harp to escape from her hands.

Lazarus now saw assembl'd round him, and the mother of Christ, more than five hundred people: he knew they were inheritors of salvation, the first fruits of God, who were destin'd one day to wear crowns near the throne, and who even now wander'd in the labyrinth of fate, as at break of day the pilgrim proceeds along the beaten path. This sight inspir'd Lazarus with the most lively joy: borne as upon the wings of the most ravishing thoughts, he ascended the eminence, near which he had been reclining, from whence he once more cast his eyes upon the inheritors of the kingdom of Heaven, now praying upon earth; then, penetrated with the most lively gratitude, he rais'd his eyes and hands towards Heaven, and thus express'd his feelings:

The Saviour has assembled us all in this place, the blind, the lame, the deaf, the necessitous, and those of an humble mind, who put all their trust in God, and do not wholly depend upon the assistance of men. Future witnesses of the resurrection! ye know that the risen sent you to the mount of the transfiguration, that ye might behold his glory, respecting which you are one day to bear witness, respecting the only Son of the Father, full of

truth and grace; respecting Christ, to whom in every age, may honour and adoration be his portion! I raise my head above ye with the purest joy; though I no longer call down blessings upon you, since the Most Merciful has already blessed you, by promising to shew himself to you upon the Tabor: thus consecrated, you may with me penetrate into the distance of futurity, where, for the love of his name, persecutors will oblige you to endure disgrace; you will encounter many difficulties, and meet with much trouble, while running your race amid the effusion of the blood of martyrs; but these difficulties, and these sufferings, will procure you a crown of glory from above. I have met with much favour—my tears express my gratitude towards my Divine Benefactor; but my blood will not be shed to bear witness in the cause of Jesus. I shall be sooner recall'd towards my Saviour, to plant a refreshing shade around the tents of peace, where reposes the combatant: praise be to him who calls me the first to enjoy the eternal reward! you will follow me by a narrower gate, by a thorny and bloody road. Blessed be the holy name of Christ! may it be glorify'd to all eternity! Ah! may ye courageously suffer disgrace, and the disdain of the incredulous, who do not acknowledge the Sovereign of Heaven and of earth; for those who, without having seen the resurrection, shall be led towards God by your prayers and example, will also be exposed to the rebukes and the disdain of those unbelievers in Christ, and will suffer much from that weapon, which though it does not draw blood, often destroys more effectually by injuring the reputation: God pursues in silence amongst men the most hidden ways; but when the end is accomplish'd, he calls forth his thunder, and strikes the decisive blow.

Thus spoke Lazarus: and upon looking round him, he perceiv'd under the shade of an eminence, many vessels fill'd with food and liquor, the produce of corn and of the vine. He then said, Separate the bread from the wine, which is to form this fraternal repast, and place them before the apostles, the most sacred witnesses,

that they may bless both. My friends, ye who hope and expect his appearance, let us together partake of a holy repast in memory of his death. His proposition was receiv'd with transport; and having chosen seven young men to set out the bread and wine, they drew nearer to each other.

Some immediately fell on their knees; others, with tearful eyes, rais'd their hands to Heaven, while the young men plac'd the bread and wine before the assembly. Lazarus join'd them, and standing with pensive looks, he fervently rais'd his clasped hands to Heaven; then on every side, mov'd by joy and affection, did the angels and the risen approach the society of Christ; while Lazarus, in a grave and solemn tone, and as if he wish'd at the same time to invoke the divine victim, said:

Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour, during the terrible night of his sufferings, when he was betray'd, and deliver'd to be put to death, took the bread and broke it, return'd thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take and eat—this is my body, which I have given for you; every time that you do this, do it in memory of me. And during that same night of suffering of our Saviour, when the sweat and blood flow'd from his body at Gethsemane, he also took the chalice, return'd thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink ye all out of this chalice of the new covenant, which I found by my blood, which is shed for the remission of your sins; every time that ye do this, do it in memory of me.

The faithful receiv'd the bread and wine with humble and sincere compunction, and with the firm resolution of remaining attached to God, even till the end of their lives. When they approach'd, or retir'd from each other, they spoke in words of comfort, such as these (10), Let us continue to advance in the road which leads to God. We shall not enjoy the fullness of peace, till we have ran our noble race. He has himself endur'd ignominy and disgrace; he has suffer'd what we are none of us requir'd to suffer. May the Divine Mediator be

exalted, both in heaven and upon earth! He has accomplish'd the redemption. Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest, is enter'd into the Holy of Holies! May the chalice of the new covenant restore thy strength, when thy heart shall overflow with sorrow, when during the torments of the most cruel martyrdom, thy soul, panting after Heaven, shall be ready to take its flight thither! Oh! blessed mother of God, salute me as thou wert saluted by the angel! Having reach'd the Son of our common Father, I am also become an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven! Of what avail to me are now all the grandeurs of the earth! and I have still more superior delight in expectation: I shall see the Divine unknown, the impenetrable, the most admirable!

Ah! I have just been admitted to partake of the repast of salvation, me who before this happy moment was so miserable! When I shall have reach'd the tents of eternity, I shall begin to live a second life, a life of blessedness: we shall then at free cost quench our thirst with long draughts from the sources of life. Oh! when shall I see the Heavens open, and Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Father? Oh! when shall I follow the road of the seventh young man (11)? I shall also drink this chalice of death, in memory of his decease. May the Redeemer be prais'd in Heaven and on earth! The more the evils of this world shall fall upon thee, the more wilt thou be inclin'd to cry to Heaven, and the more wilt thy life be in conformity to the rules of Jesus Christ. After his repast of love, our Saviour proceeded to Gethsemane, where the sweat and blood flow'd down his bent forehead. Take pity on me, Divine Mediator, whom I refus'd to follow, said Bethoron, take pity on me, that I may continue faithful to the end! I sow'd with tears; but I reap with joy. I am fated to die twice, said Tabitha, as an agreeable drowsiness after sunrise frequently follows our first waking from the sleep of night: after which, the recollection of his death, the fruit of his vine, will for ever restore me to the kingdom of my Father. Oh you Bedoni, whom he sent to me,

said Joel, and ye other angels, where are ye? suffer me to rejoice with you! Why cannot I ascend by the same road as Stephen, or by that of the seventh young man, even to Benoni, even unto Christ; while thou Samma, and Elkannah, ascendest to Simeon, and to Jesus Christ! He will then remove the darkness from before thy eyes, Elkannah, and will dry all our tears. The darkness vanish'd from before my eyes, said Lazarus, when I was recall'd to life: and thou, Elkannah, who hast suffer'd with still more patience, shalt soon experience a similar sensation.

Suddenly Mary cried aloud to Heaven, Sovereign Pontiff, Son of God, I didst conceive thee! I will announce thy death till thou callest me to thee: may the Divine Saviour be exalted in Heaven and on earth!

While they were thus encouraging each other, by thus speaking the words of life, as if they were already ready to enter the porticoes of eternity, they saw Jesus descending from one of the eminences, and the Divinity advancing towards them. Soon he drew near: ecstacy and rapture now fill'd every eye, and every heart.

As the first spring breezes gently agitate the leaves of the forest, so did this body of the faithful appear agitated by this long expected appearance of our Saviour. It was for them a conviction of Heaven, which strengthen'd their faith, and chang'd every doubt into certainty.

A pilgrim expos'd to the burning rays of the sun, in vain endeavours to quench his thirst, which is insatiable; so do these regard our Lord, always more anxious to see him; but Jesus, no longer able to restrain himself, thus spoke:—

Salvation and peace be with you, my children! In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you all: I will come again at the death of each of ye faithful, and receive ye unto myself, that where I am, there ye may also be: if ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, whom sinners are not in a state to receive, because they knoweth him not; but ye shall know him, for

he shall dwell with you, and be in you. I will not forsake you, as, when dying, a mother forsakes her children; I will come and conduct you, like a good guide, to the heavenly knowledge of eternal life: at that day, ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that knoweth my commandments, and keeprth them, he it is that loveth me, and he shall be lov'd of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Suddenly, in the midst of the tearful witnesses, the eyes of Elkannah were open'd to see the Divinity: he fell prostrate upon the earth, rending the air with his screams of joy; and rose again, as if gifted with new life. The Mediator resum'd:—

In truth, I tell you, the Father and me will love him; we will come, and we will dwell in him. I am the true vine; my Father is the vine-dresser, and ye are the branches; and every branch that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that this superb vine may bring forth more fruit. Ye have not chosen me; but I have chosen you, and made ye prosper, that ye should bring forth fruit, and that you should grow for eternity: listen to my solemn command, and let it be your comfort; for the world will hate you as it hated me: so love one another. These things have I spoken unto ye, that in me ye might have peace; not that of the world, for in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; if ye love me, ye will rejoice in me.

Such were the words for their consecration for the approaching fight, and for the eternal life; and after he had spoken, he disappear'd from before their eyes.

When joy and serenity had succeeded to their enthusiasm, they perceiv'd, near the place where Christ had disappear'd, the child Nepthoa, who seem'd to sleep; they were preparing to awake him; but the happy child was dead. And Lazarus cried, Go and gather some flowers; I am going to dig him a grave. While the small hillock rose, similar to those which one day

will cover us all, dust upon dust, they gather'd some flowers, and taking the child, who still seem'd to smile, they let him down into the grave, which, by degrees, they fill in with earth, and strew large handfuls of flowers upon the place where his body is sown for the resurrection; after which, they departed from the Tabor. Several of them again turn their eyes towards the flowery hillock, which had just risen, without any feeling of affliction, since this death was a reward, and he was to awake again to life at the resurrection.

Those of the seventy disciples who had visited the Tabor now quitted this mount of transfiguration; and as they descended, they were led on one side by a path in the valley, into a little wood of palm trees.

There they found assembled the twelve apostles, and those who had not been upon the mountain; to them they related, in energetic terms, but in few words, the happiness which our Saviour had afforded so great a number. How could they have said much? Tears choaked their words. After their recital, the most profound silence reign'd among the assembly: they all experienced a presage of their future happiness; that delicious sensation which is a foretaste of the divine inheritance.

But James tore himself from the embraces of his companions. Disciple of the Lord, said they, where art thou going? Ah! surely the Lord will appear to his children! I am going to him, to give him the meeting upon the Tabor. But what would be thy affliction, were he to appear to us, and thou wert not here?

His eye is every where; he knows how much I desire to see him, and why I go to meet him: suffer me to proceed: I shall have no cause to grieve.

He departed; and having soon reach'd the shade of the elevated rocks, he stopp'd, and raising his clasped hands to Heaven, he thus pray'd:—

Oh! Lord God, do not yet ascend to thy Father; listen to my entreaties: we all hope it is true that thou wilt appear to us again; but we are not at any certainty of

your so doing. Oh! Divine Mediator, do not yet leave us. I have found favour in your eyes, Most Merciful! I will therefore conceal myself in this cavern, and there prostrate, I will wait thy pleasure. Only cross this place, Lord, and my eye will, at a distance, follow thy glory.

While James thus pray'd, Jesus Christ seiz'd his hand, rais'd him, and bless'd him for his heavenly mission. Giving a scream of joy, the disciple, in trembling, follow'd Jesus along the road, which led to the little wood of palm trees in the valley. Already, from the foot of the mount, the disciples perceiv'd Jesus, and by his side the happy Zebedee. The Lord appear'd to them more dazzling, and more superior to the angels, than he had ever done before, since he had risen from the grave. They wish'd to advance to meet him; but an angel made them a sign to remain near the palm trees. Dost thou recollect, said they, one to the other, how surrounded by murderers, his hands loaded with chains, we saw him upon the Mount of Olives? How Herod, dressing him in a white robe, despised him? How Pilate, after that had him scourg'd with rods, and crown'd with thorns, him whom we now behold so radiant? Ah! does he already wish to ascend to Heaven? Will this be the last time we shall see him? A separation from him will be the most grievous that can affect our hearts, the most wounding to our feelings: what a cruel moment will that be, when we shall be call'd upon to part from Jesus Christ! Is it already arriv'd? At present it appears to me that the mountains and the hills shake with joy; even the trees of the forest rejoice. The sky seems to have assum'd its finest golden hue, the firmament is of the most dazzling blue, and my heart overflows with joy; and thou sheddest tears, because thou thinkest of the time when he bore his cross to the Calvary; and how after death, Joseph shrouded him in his burial clothes.

Thus did the disciples converse with each other, till the moment when Christ drew near; then they all fell upon their knees, extending their arms towards their Divine Saviour. He saluted them with his heavenly

salutation—Peace be with you! remember what has been foretold: he was led like a lamb to the slaughter; he patiently follow'd, and did not open his mouth. My friends, I shall not again enjoy the pleasure of seeing you upon earth: I shall never again eat honey with you, nor of what ye dress'd upon the strand at dawn of day: I shall never again repose under the shade here below, for I shall henceforth dwell in the eternal tabernacles, where there are many abodes, and where you will again see your Messiah, and with the patriarchs of the ancient covenant, you will enjoy the pleasures of friendship, which will never be interrupted by sorrowful adieus. Jesus, now kneeling in all his majesty in the midst of these witnesses of his resurrection, thus pray'd aloud:—

Father! the hour being arriv'd to manifest thy only Son in all his splendour, here hast thou glorify'd him, and been glorify'd by him; thou hast granted him power over mortals, that he might ensure them from death, and that he might ensure them eternal life; it is ensuring to themselves a blessed immortality, to acknowledge that thou art the Eternal, and that the Messiah, whom thou didst send, is thy Son, and the Sovereign upon earth. Father! I already see with my spiritual eye, the last and perfect consummation of all things. I have glorify'd thee upon earth; I have finish'd the work of thy divine decrees: now a crown awaits me in thy right hand: thou wilt restore to me the glory that was my portion before the creation of the world. I have manifested thy name to the elect that thou hast granted me amongst the sinners: I am witness that they have receiv'd, and faithfully follow'd, the wise maxims which I have taught them: now they also acknowledge that I came from thee; for I have taught them, Father, what you have taught me, and it is from thee that they have receiv'd their knowledge, as it is impress'd upon their hearts that I am the messenger of God. Reunited with thee, Father, in full possession of beatitude, I address thee, not for the world, but for those who more particularly belong to thee, and who have contributed to

my glory. I am now about to depart from the earth, and to return to thee; but these will, for a length of time, witness the odious proceedings of sinners, and will be their victims: may they remain faithful, oh Father! in the proud knowledge of him who is now reconcil'd to mankind! May they be united, as we are united, a family of brothers! When I was with them as their equal, I myself watch'd over their immortal souls: here they are, Father; none of them have perish'd, except the son of perdition, who fulfil'd the accomplishment of the prophecy: I tell them this myself, that when I am gone, they may reflect upon my glory, and participate in my joy. They have heard thy words of life: sinners will hate them, as they have hated me. I do not ask you to withdraw them from the world, but only to preserve them from their persecutor, the spirit of perdition: sanctify them by thy truth; thy word is truth: I have lain down my life for them, that they may appear before thee purify'd from sin.

But I do not pray solely for them; the children of the new creation will, like dew upon the leaves, be one day born to me from their words; it is for them I also implore thee, to the end that they may be united as we are, and that all the earth may acknowledge it was thee who sent me.

I have granted eternal life, and my glory, to those whom thou hast granted me, that they may unite themselves as we do, to accomplish the divine end, and that even sinners may learn that Jesus was sent from heaven, and that God loves the children of the redemption, as he has lov'd his only Son. Father! may those whom I have sav'd be assembled where I am; let them contemplate the glory which thou didst grant me before the foundation of the world! Most righteous Father! the world hast mistaken thee; but I have réveal'd to thy elect the mystery of thy divinity, and of my mission, and I will engrave these things still deeper upon their hearts, that the love which thou hast borne me may fire

their souls, and that their immortal spirit may continually dwell upon the thought of their Saviour.

The Mediator having finish'd his prayer, a flood of glory encompass'd his person, and he disappear'd from mortal eyes.

As the audience is impress'd by the melody of a hymn chanted in the temple, intended to celebrate the resurrection, or the source of eternal light, which unites, by a strain of music, worthy of the poem, the harmony of instruments to the sound of the voice; which, beginning in a soft strain, increases by degrees, and continues with well-sustain'd melody, lively, affecting, and harmonious, till it terminates in an astonishing and original finale; thus were the disciples affected (I speak like a mortal of heavenly things) by the sight of the Lord in all the dazzling effulgence of his glory, and when they heard him pray to the Divinity. At last, they prepar'd to depart from the palm trees of Galilee, and to return with joyfulness towards Salem: they scarcely perceiv'd that they were accompany'd by angels, so deeply were they penetrated by the favours bestow'd upon them by this last appearance; and these immortals, lost in meditation, respecting this glorious commencement of the kingdom of God, forgot that they were visible to the disciples, and that they had not been sent to appear to them.

John now separated himself from those even with whom he was rejoicing respecting the redemption; he wish'd to be alone with God, and in perfect tranquility of soul, to give himself up to profound reflection upon the ineffable consequences of eternal salvation. Thus did he advance into the labyrinth of futurity, with real and true humility; but he walk'd like a mortal in the ways of God, and therefore soon lost himself.

Yet, by the sole illusions of his imagination, he is wrapt in enthusiasm, and he abundantly enjoy'd so flattering an error, by considering the directions of God respecting our happiness, which increases, by thousands and tens of thousands of degrees, those directions which

fire every thinking mind, of which no mortal can define the extent, since it reaches to infinity. But, notwithstanding the brightness of the light which dazzled the meditative thoughts of the apostle, he could not help feeling that he was in want of a heavenly ladder. Actuated by the most affectionate interest, Salem, one of his guardian angels, hover'd near him, and the immortal perceiv'd that God shed over the disciple, while at prayers, a sacred sleep. The smile of the angel also grew animated, as he contemplated the features of the sleeping apostle.

John saw when he awoke, she who was his companion at the cross, and who will also be so, when he is restor'd to the Finisher of the new covenant. He flew to meet the mother of the Mediator and his own, and thus address'd her, in enthusiastic joy:—

Mother of Christ, I have been taught wisdom, during a delightful sleep, and have learnt much respecting the future salvation. I have been favour'd with a heavenly vision, which has presented things to me, very different to the idea I had form'd, aided by the researches of my imagination, respecting the designs of God, for my mind had advanc'd into the distance of futurity; I had dar'd, though a sinner and a mortal, to attempt to fathom the directions of God, to sound those depths, into which it does not belong even to angels to penetrate.

Here, in a pleasing union, we were assembl'd in our cottage, near the temple; the little society freely convers'd with each other, no one wishing to oblige the others to conform to his opinion. Mother of our divine Saviour, ah! if the future great societies do but continue to walk in the same charitable path, if they do not suffer themselves to be withdrawn from it by the desire of arbitrary, severe, and tyrannic dominion! We were bless'd with some lights, but a cloud rather veil'd them; we were resolv'd to die; yet, when death threaten'd us, our courage fail'd. We were anxious to secure our own salvation, but we did not busy ourselves respecting that of others, even to our own denial; we breath'd vows, that we

might not be detain'd upon earth; we seiz'd the pilgrim's staff; we hop'd, we languish'd, to be very soon near Christ: When soon there came a sound from heaven, a rushing mighty wind, and it fill'd all the house where we were sitting; and there appear'd unto us cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of us; and we felt the effusion of sentiment, more abundant than ever, in our hearts. The flames of love with which we learnt to love him, consum'd our souls; and the cloud being now remov'd, ceas'd to obscure our knowledge: we became resign'd to his will, and no longer panted after immediate death; but look'd forward, with humble expectation, to bowing our bald heads under the sword of martyrdom: we were still mindful of our own salvation; but were far more anxious to insure that of our brethren. We were animated by the most sincere and ardent zeal for the society of God's elect. Our anxiety to be with Christ was subordinate to the will of the Lord, which may not have destin'd us to rejoin him, till after the lapse of many years, till after our brethren, instructed, animated, and fortify'd by our consolations, both during this life and upon their death-beds, shall have preceded us thither in crowds. We no longer consider'd ourselves as pilgrims, ready prepar'd to ascend into the heavenly kingdom; we were guided, but our pilgrim's staff was as yet only to be our guide upon earth, where we are doom'd to watch, with care, anxiety, and trouble, over the salvation of those who shall acknowledge the truth of our mission; but we shall turn away from those who are unworthy of partaking in the reward of eternal life, shaking the dust from our shoes.

John's recital of this vision convey'd the most pleasing sensations to the soul of the mother of our Saviour.

The Lyre (12), with the most brilliant stars of her constellation, turn'd towards the most effulgent stars of the constellation of the altar (13). This was the signal that was to announce to the heavens, that the Mediator was preparing to ascend to the right hand of God.

A confus'd prescience of what he had declar'd to them

during their last interview, led the disciples to expect that Jesus would soon leave them, that he was going to return to his glory, and to leave them expos'd to bonds and to disgrace; but which would finally lead them also to glory. Nevertheless they were bathed in tears. Thaddeus long repress'd the grief which overwhelm'd his afflicted soul, before he thus gave it vent:—

Yes, this separation from our well-belov'd is certainly very bitter, and very deplorable; it even shakes the soul, and pierces the very bottom of the heart; and howsoever great may be the portion of felicity which awaits the friend, the separation harrows up the soul of him who remains below, since the prospect of our reunion is yet far distant, and is hidden and conceal'd in the uncertainty of the future. No angel, taking pity on our wretchedness, condescends to give us the slightest intimation when we are to experience the transport which the approach of that happy moment will occasion us. No compassionate spirit appears to discover to us by the slightest sign when we may expect this more delightful and more sacred hour than ever morning yet proclaim'd, or mid-day sun enlighten'd, than any night yet cover'd with its shade, or any moon render'd visible: yet you, who died through a God, ye were our brother; ye have shed the same tears, and the destiny of mortals is known to you.

Thomas had assembl'd the twelve apostles, and the seventy disciples, to lead them to Gethsemane, to visit the place where, during the evening of the first separation, Christ had prostrated himself in fervent prayer, before the Judge of the world.

This idea of taking thither the disciples did not originate in Thomas; it had been inspir'd him by the Mediator.

Suddenly Jesus appear'd in the midst of them: he conducted the witnesses, who follow him; and passing slowly before the grave of the Bethanite (14), they blessed the holy woman, who slept with the Lord. They then proceeded farther from Jerusalem.

The ascent of the mountain of Olives became more steep, and the summit of the mountain presented a greater extent. The Mediator continu'd silent; but the disciples thought they perceiv'd in him some indications of an approaching separation; they convers'd affectionately together, often pausing, so much were their hearts oppress'd: often did they contemplate the hill of death, and still more frequently did they turn their eyes towards the open tomb, since it was from thence that the well-belov'd had return'd to them: this recollection reviv'd their spirits. The summit of the mountain was insensibly cover'd by the holy band, whom Christ had chosen to accompany him in his ascension, of the faithful, who were risen from the dead, and of all the seraphims, who had been appointed to serve him, since the night of his birth at Bethlehem, even to his final transfiguration.

As upon Mount Lebanon, one of the oldest cedars raises its head above the others, so appear'd Gabriel amidst the heavenly body, who saw the Divinity approaching them, and the disciples following him with a look of contentment, strongly blended with grief.

Eloa was more effulgent than ever; he had been elected the first of the guardians of this earth, now freed from the divine malediction, since those blessed words had been heard, which had blotted out those which had burst forth in thunder, for Jesus had exclaim'd upon Calvary, All is finish'd! This sublime thought fill'd the soul of Eloa, the elect of God, with the purest joy. He looked forward to the future destiny of the earth, from century to century, till the moment when the celestial messenger is to bring him the trumpet of the resurrection, with which he is to awaken the dead, in the sight of the cherubims.

Jesus being arriv'd with the disciples upon the summit of the Mount of Olives, the gentle zephyrs of growing day gently floated around them, and refresh'd these happy, but weak mortals, for whom the weight of mortality was still a heavy burthen. The only Son of the

Father, awful in his majestic beauty, was in the midst of them. Never before had his disciples, nor even the angels, seen him thus upon earth. He had an air of majesty, which no lyre, no human voice, nor any idea, even approaching the nearest to a thought emanating from Heaven, can describe.

From the most elevated star which the created eye can reach, from all the worlds of the creation, from all the poles of the surrounding globes, who from the greatest distance draw their light from the flaming torrents of brightness of their respective suns, all the spirits compos'd like us of vapour, fire, air, and earth, in a word, every thing in existence, fix'd their regard upon him who had accomplish'd every thing.

The eye of Eloa, the elected of God, darted even into the centre of the immense circle of those who were considering Christ: he then prostrated himself before the Divine Mediator, and solemnly plac'd his radiant crown at the feet of the perfect Restorer.

Christ was now upon the summit of the hill; around him were the disciples, and invisibly the risen, and the angels. He now affectionately extended his arms towards his disciples, saying,—

Do not depart from Jerusalem; but await the effect of the promise of the Father, which saith, that ye have heard of me since my resurrection; for John was baptiz'd with water, but ye shall be baptis'd by the Holy Ghost in a few days, and the promise shall be fulfill'd. Some among them interrupted him with this question:—

Lord, wilt thou, at this time, restore again the kingdom of Israel? But he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times, or the seasons, which the Father has put in his own power. While speaking, without interrupting himself, he cast a beneficent look towards Bethany, and Lazarus was glorify'd. Immediately he was led by his angel to the summit of the mountain, that he might join in the heavenly procession. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon ye, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem,

and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

Christ, then drawing nearer them, bestow'd upon the witnesses an affectionate look of protection, and raising his hands said:—

May God have you in his holy keeping, and bless you! May God cause his face to shine upon you, and may he be your help! May he turn his face towards you, and bestow his peace, which passeth all understanding, upon you! Thus did our Saviour bless them. Heaven! earth! and all ye the chosen of God! thus did the Mediator accomplish every thing here below: and now a cloud descended; and having receiv'd him, he was taken up to Heaven.

The witnesses long follow'd, with their eyes, the Risen, conqueror of death; their eyes were bath'd in tears, and their souls experienc'd the softest sensations—the same sensation which we shall feel, when Christ, borne upon the clouds of Heaven, shall return as Judge of the world.

They no longer saw him; but two men stood by them in white apparel; these were Eloa and Salem; one of them, whose head was surrounded by a brilliant glory, and who held a golden staff in his right hand, said to those who hardly listen'd to him in their transport of joy,

Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come down, in like manner as ye have seen him ascend to his Father. Having thus spoken, they disappear'd; and the disciples return'd to Jerusalem, their hearts overflowing with gratitude, and their mouths with praise.

And they abode together in their dwelling near the temple, praising and blessing God; and thus consecrated by prayer, they awaited for the promise of the Father, who cloath'd them with virtue from above, that they might bear witness respecting our Saviour, after they had receiv'd the baptism of fire, or of the Holy Ghost.

In the original, there is another book; but even Klopstock himself has not numbered it, therefore he does not seem to include it in his poem, the action of which certainly ceases here, as the concluding book is divided into different hymns, and into choruses of angels, who invite each other to sing. Sometimes a single prophet relates chronologically the wonders which God operated to preserve and rule the people from whom the Messiah was to be born. Sometimes the angels and patriarchs unite, to render thanks and honour to him, by and for whom these succeeding miracles were performed. The principal merit of this concluding book consists in the variety of the rhyme, and of the versification; and this would be wholly lost in a prose translation, which has but very feebly, in the foregoing four books, followed the original German text.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

TO

BOOK XVI.

(1) KLOPSTOCK wishes the reader to understand that the souls of Pagans thought they were before Olympus, and that they saw Jupiter surrounded by the fabulous deities.

(2) In this passage, wishes to compare the supreme felicity which the favourable judgment of Christ bestowed upon some souls, to that which a blind man would feel, were he, by some sudden miracle, to have his sight restored.

(3) Klopstock here seems to entertain an opinion, that our souls, after death, will be transported into different globes, in which, either by punishments suited to our crimes, or by a foretaste of beatitude, we shall be insensibly led to attain the necessary degree of perfection to appear in the presence of our Creator.

(4) As these are supposed to be pagan souls who appear before the judgment seat, they invoke the gods they had been taught to worship, whom they fancy they recognize in the Messiah.

(5) The German word is *Zeus Kroneon*, which thus translate, as Jupiter was, I understand, adored by several nations, under the name of *Zeus* Jupiter, and *Kroneon* Saturn.

(6) As it is said in the beginning of this book, that it was the souls of those who had departed this life since the resurrection of our Saviour, who were brought before him upon the Tabor for judgment, he cannot, of course, have in view any of the heroes of antiquity, but some individuals of importance, whom he supposes to have lived and died about that period.

(7) The names of the stars, or worlds here alluded to, I cannot translate; all I understand respecting them is, that they derived their names from different countries in Palestine. The author supposes that these souls are to visit these planetary worlds in progressive succession; and in consequence, our Saviour decides in which of these worlds they are to be told he is their judge, or are to be taught to consider him as their Redeemer.

(8) This is addressed to another soul, which I wish to be understood by the recommencement of the sentence.

(9) Or *Allwater*, superior God acknowledged under this name by the ancient Germans.

(10) This name, as well as the episode, are of the author's invention.

(11) An Eastern custom.

(12) The author was, I understand from his memoirs, seized with a dangerous fit of illness while completing this work; and the hopes he entertained of having secured his salvation, did not prevent him from regretting his supposed inability to conclude his poem.

(13) This alludes to the angels and the saints, who surrounded our Saviour upon the Tabor.

(14) That is to say, in hell.

(15) This repetition Klopstock dee
recall to the recollection of the reade
the Tabor the first degree of the exaltati
that after the resurrection, he sat in j
souls of those who had since departed

(16) This is the name the author g
children that the Messiah placed in
people, when he recommended them
Luke, chap. 18, verse 15, 16, and 17

(17) They are interrupted while v
God, Brama, that they had lacera
themselves to do him honour, as the
were in the habit of doing, to induc
lieve in their holiness. The author
a crowd of pagan souls appearing be
diator, whom they all believe to be
had worshipped upon earth, and to
boast of their good works in honou

(18) This was the ancient Mars c
also honoured him under the nam
Vandals styled him the God of wa
seem to allude to him as one o
indeed, the Germans worshipped
groves and woods, as did the ancie
of the Druids.

(19) In the second book, wher
said, that two angels constantly ke

(20) This was Adramelech.
Klopstock relates the history of th
ther piled up after their revolt ag

EXPLANATORY NOTES

TO

BOOK XVII.

(1) KLOPSTOCK was of opinion, that before our souls entered their mortal bodies, they had pre-existed in a spiritual life, which they will recollect when they again revive.

(2) The author always makes cherubims precede and accompany our Saviour after his resurrection.

(3) With regard to this episode respecting an inferior, or lower world, and the dark valley, it is necessary to remark, that it was the opinion of the Hebrews, that after their demise they descended into an obscure globe, from which David requests to be exempted in the 15th psalm. This place was called Sheol, and was supposed to be under the earth. They thought that those who had perished during the deluge were detained in one of these inferior worlds, till they were to be delivered by Jesus Christ, after his resurrection. The general belief of the fathers of the church, respecting these points, is founded upon these words in the creed—"*He descended into hell,*" and upon the epistle of St. Peter, chapter 3, verse 19—"By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." But other authorities explain these words into a deliverance from pagans, and from the darkness of idolaters.

(4) That is, that each of them dreaded that they

should not be among the number who were to be saved which was the most bitter of their afflictions.

(5) That of the disciples and apostles.

(6) Third chapter of Genesis, verse 15—" And I wil put enmity between thee and the woman, and betwee thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and tho shalt bruise his heel."

(7) The ancients danced at all their religious ceremo nies, and all their sacred rejoicings: the dancing roun an object of respect was a mark of veneration. Th David danced round the ark: the priests of Baal roun the altar of their God, while they implored him to mal himself known, in answer to Elijah's defiance. Th sacred dances, called brawls, were danced in sever towns of France the first Sundays in Lent, round fir which were lit in squares, or market-places. Duri the last century, the people in the province of Lemos danced in the choir of their churches, in honour of the patron saint, as they still dance round the maypole a the bonfires, in honour of St. John the Baptist.

(8) The wife of Joseph, the son of Jacob, in Egy

(9) According to the author, the youngest of the M cabees.

(10) Or Mary, the deceased sister of Lazarus Martha.

(11) This pilgrim, who takes the name of Japhet Joseph. Tenedos is a celebrated island in the Archi ago, about ten miles long, and the same broad. Sa is also a larger island, in the same sea.

(12) Hushai was the friend of David, whom he sa

by the advice which he gave to Absalom, in opposition to that of Architophel.

(13) Jethro, the priest of Midian, the father-in-law of Moses.

(14) First Book of Chronicles, chapter 9, verse 19—"And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers being over the host of the Lord, were keepers of the entry." Second Book of Chronicles, chapter 20, verse 19.—"And the Levites of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high."

(15) Psalm 39, verse 1—"To the chief musician, even to Jeduthun." First Book of Chronicles, chapter 16, verse 41, and 42—"And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the Lord, because his mercy endureth for ever; And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals, for those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God; and the sons of Jeduthun were porters." Second Book of Chronicles, chapter 35, verse 15—"And the singers the sons of Asaph were in their place, according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer."

(16) The daughter of Job.

(17) The oldest friend of Job, whom she thinks is inclined to appear to Lazarus.

(18) Mary now addresses the principal chorister of

the temple of God, mentioned in the quotations from the Book of Chronicles.

(19) The Roman centurion, who kept guard near the tomb of Jesus.

(20) The young man who speaks last, and who contradicts the other friends of Job. Job, chapter 32.

(21) Bethoron is the name that Klopstock gives to the rich man who could not resolve to follow Jesus Christ when the Messiah told him that, to be perfect, he must give all he was worth to the poor and follow him. St Matthew, chapter 19, verse 21, 22, and 23—"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go, and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly ever enter the kingdom of heaven."

(22) This guest of Lazarus, under the name of Gerson and the appearance of a Grecian pilgrim from the Island of Paros, was in reality Elihu, the friend of Job.

(23) The youngest of the Maccabees.

(24) At the conclusion of the Fifteenth Book, the lovers are elevated from the summit of the Tabo amidst the assembly of the beatified. But as in the opinion of the author, our felicity is to increase after o death, by gentle and imperceptible gradations in t different spheres to which we are to be transported, th we may also imperceptibly attain the necessary degree perfection, he supposes, that upon their ascension, Ci and Semida became first inhabitants of the evening st called Hesperus, whose inhabitants are styled Hespe des. This episode, it appears from his own ackno

ledgment, was added by the author to his last edition of his works.

(25) The author supposes that during their spherical movements, the worlds send forth harmonious sounds, which bless their Creator.

(26) The name of the leper is not mentioned in the New Testament; but the proceedings of these ungrateful wretches, and the gratitude displayed by the Samaritan alone, after their miraculous cure by Jesus, are described in the Gospel of St. Luke, chapter 17, verse 15—18—"And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God. And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the other nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger."

. . . . . .

EXPLANATORY NOTES

TO

BOOK XVIII.

(1) IT is the poet who now addresses himself to his readers.

(2) This alludes to those who were burnt at *Auto da fés*, by the orders of the Inquisition.

(3) Which was always carried before the victims, as if such a cymbol ought to have served as a pretence for such cruelty.

(4) The angel who had poured out the bowls of blood and tears, here concludes his speech. Others rise in succession to accuse the souls who are to be judged, or to sing for them, and with them, hymns of rejoicing.

(5) Who, according to the Revelations, is to judge the tribes of Israel. The apostle Thaddeus is here meant.

(6) It is Adam who speaks.

(7) I presume this alludes to a martyr, whose family wished him to remain an idolator, and who suffered death in his youth.

(8) He addresses himself to those souls who, having sooner than himself enjoyed the blessing of immortality, did honour to the Messiah, as to the light of the world.

(9) Which the profane must not pollute by their presumptuous curiosity.

(10) The Jewish nation.—To these patriarchs were afterwards joined the Jews who have been converted since the coming of the Messiah.

(11) Jesus, while upon earth, raised many from the dead. It is Abraham who is supposed to speak.

(12) The great men and princes of the earth, who persecuted the Christians, or converted Jews.

(13) Abraham here alludes to St. Paul.

(14) Of Christianity, of which St. Paul was one of the principal supports, and whose beatified name cannot be rendered in any language.

(15) This is addressed to those who doubt of the immortality of the soul.

(16) It is Jesus who is speaking as judge.

(17) It is Adam who speaks.

(18) The chief of the singers in David's time.

(19) I presume this alludes to some of those animals whom the Egyptians and other nations adored. By the inhabitant of the waves, the author means the crocodiles of the Nile. The rising sun is adored by many Eastern nations.

(20) This alludes to the children who were thrown alive into the fires which blazed in honour of Moloch.

(21) It is said of Enoch in Genesis, chapter 5, verse 24—"And Enoch walked with God, and he was not: for God took him." From whence Klopstock infers, that he did not die, but ascended to Heaven during his lifetime.

(22) The following episode, written in 1753, was suppressed by the author in the successive editions of the Messiah, in the fear that it might be misinterpreted, or that it might offend some zealous Catholics, who held the Virgin Mary and the saints in too great estimation.

(23) It is Adam who speaks.

(24) Eloa here apostrophizes one of the condemned kings, and then resumes the discourse which he addresses to them all.

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

TO

BOOK XIX.

(1) THE angels, who are appointed to execute th judgments of God, who are thus styled in the scriptures

(2) That is to say, their fate was made known to th spectators: they were not absolutely rejected; but the were, it may be supposed, transported into differen spheres, where they underwent various punishments which enlightened their minds, taught them to know themselves, and thus opened to them the road to per fection.

(3) Adam alludes to the moment when after th death of the Messiah, the patriarchs, and those who wer to appear to the first Christians, rose from the dead wit heavenly bodies.

(4) The angels with whom Abbadona had associate in Heaven after his creation. He next addresses him self to all the blessed.

(5) Adam returns to his narrative, respecting the la judgment.

(6) Overflowed by the deluge. The scales represe the divine justice. The author has already supposed, the Seventeenth Book, that those who perished by t deluge, fell after their death into a dank prisc

vered a great many; the remainder, after having been converted and punished, were, according to the vision of Adam, delivered at the general resurrection.

(7) Here finishes Adam's vision respecting the last judgment. The author now relates the apparition of Jesus to his disciples, to shew himself to whom he descends from the Tabor, upon which he had sat in judgment since his resurrection.

(8) Nathaniel, like all the other disciples, was overjoyed at the resurrection of his Master, though he was of a very serious turn of mind, and frequently meditating upon the sublime truths of religion.

(9) This part is taken almost literally from the Gospel of St. John, chapter 21.

(10) Various people are now supposed to address each other.

(11) The seventh Maccabeus, the martyr.

(12) A constellation of the northern pole.

(13) A constellation of the southern hemisphere.

(14) That of Mary, the sister of Lazarus.

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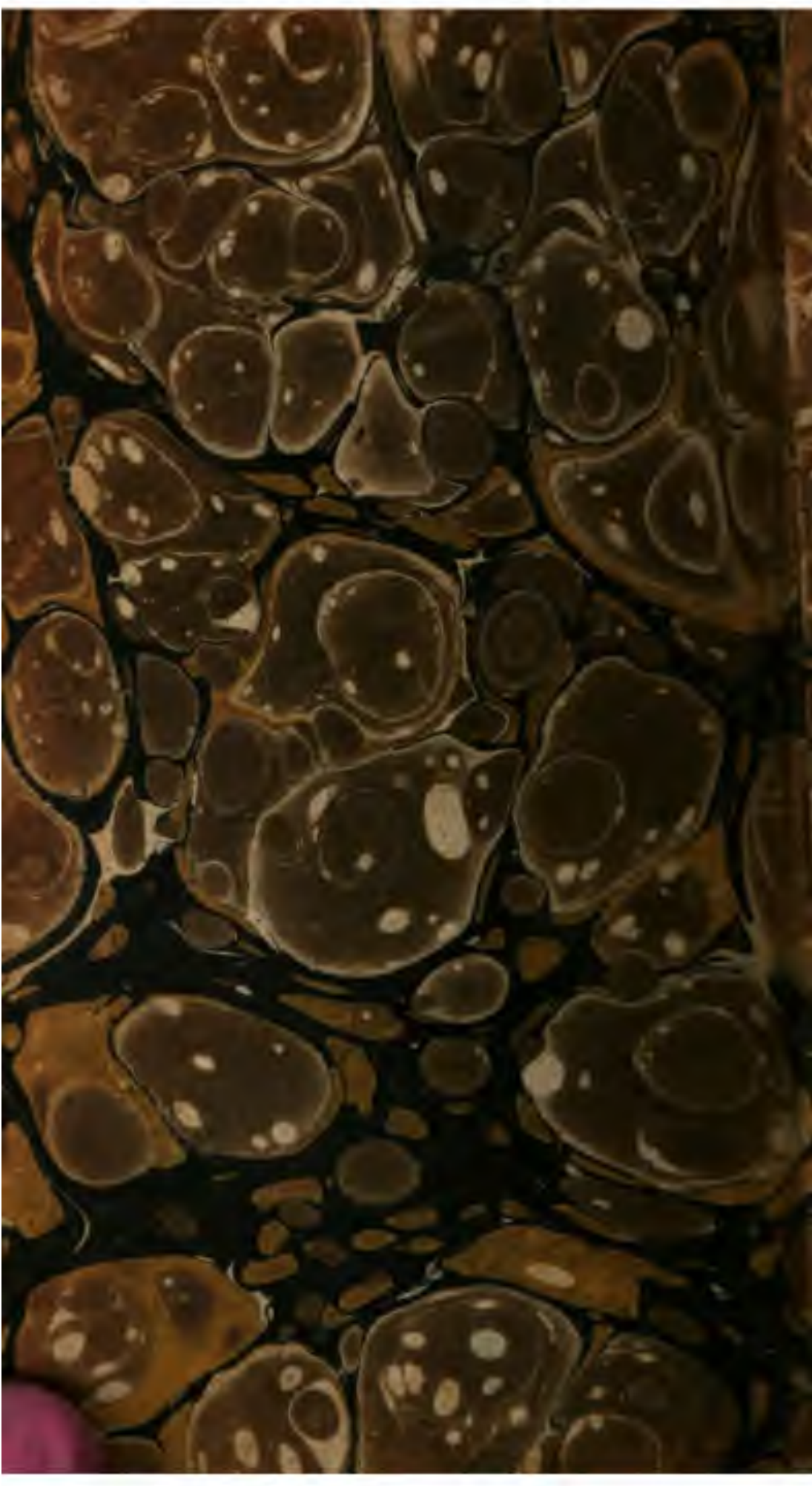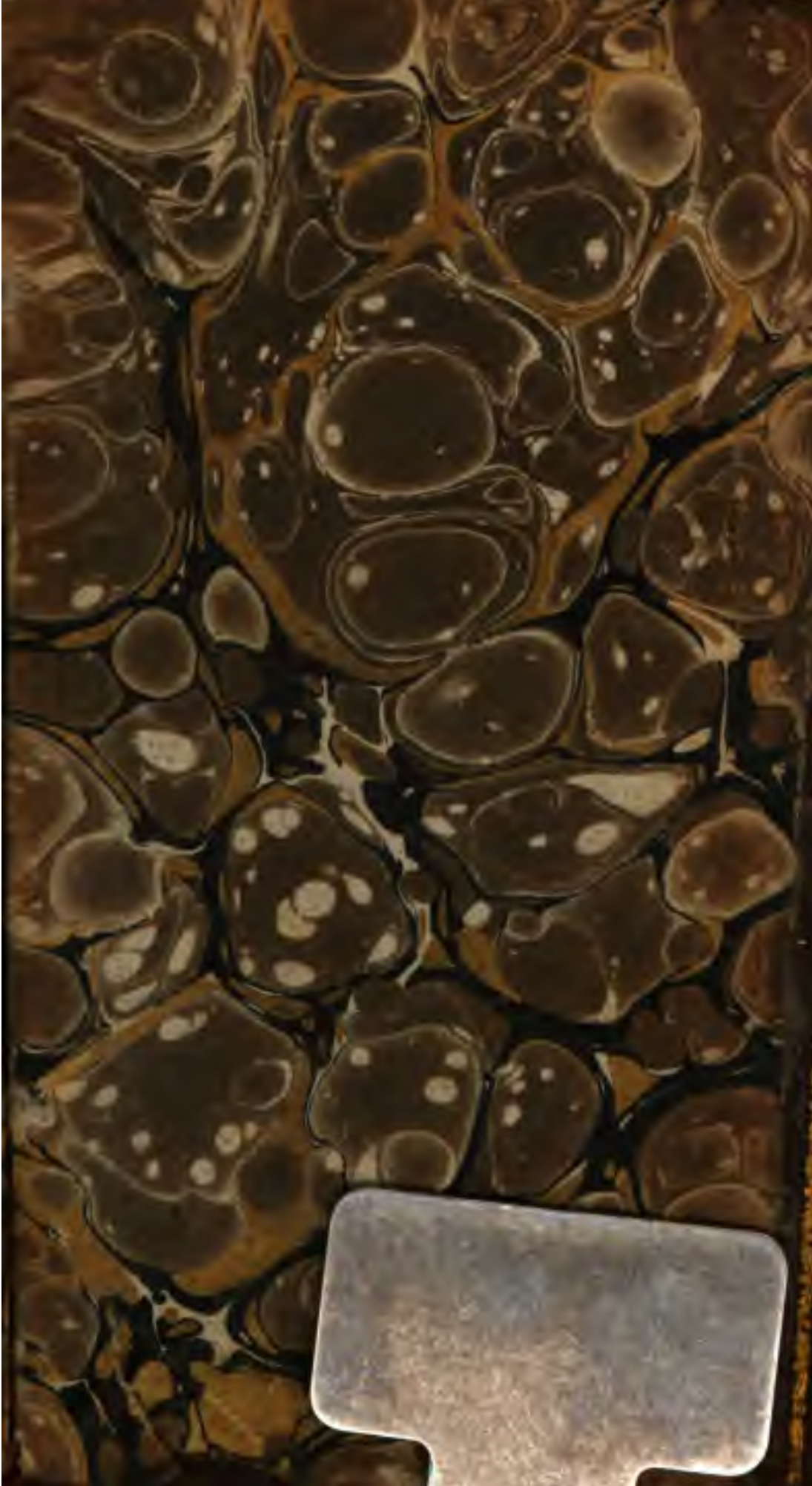
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